

Heaven upon Earth,  
OR

**Good News**

FOR  
Repenting Sinners;

Being an account of the Remarkable  
Experiences and Evidences

For eternal Life, of many Eminent Christians in several Declarations made by them upon Solemn Occasions.

Displaying the exceeding Riches of the Free Grace and Love of God in supporting them under violent Temptations, and at length filling their Souls with Divine Consolations.

Approved of as very necessary for comforting poor doubting Believers.

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By *William Dyer*, Min. of the Gospel.

*Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my Soul, Psalm 66. 17.*

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535 **Dyer** (W., Minister of Cholsbury, Bucks,  
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TO THE  
READER.

**I** Am very sensible that Discreetees of Conversion in this Age are much slighted and derided by some kind of men that make high pretences to Learning and Knowledge, who tell us that this talk of Conversion is fitter for Pagans and Infidels to hear than Christians and Protestants; But as some people speak against Learning that have none themselves, so such Persons may be thought to inveigh against Conversion, and the Spirit of God, because they never experienced the effects of either of them in themselves; For certainly,

1. It is not the taking on of the Profession of Christianity that can save our Souls, or make us happy forever. If to cease to be Jews or Pagans and to put on the Christian Profession were sufficient, when the Christians of Sardis and Laodicea, who had a name to live, would never have been condemned by our blessed Lord, and threatened to be spewed out, Rev. 3. 1, 16. Are there not many that name the name of Jesus Christ, that yet depart not from Iniquity, and

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profess they know God, but in works deny him, and will God receive these for True Converts, because they are turned to the Christian Religion.

II. It is not being Baptized into the Christian Faith, nor being Washed in the Laver of Regeneration that can denominate a Man a real and sincere Christian. Many take the Priesthood and wear the Livery of Christ, that yet never stand to their Colours nor follow their Leader; Ananias and Saphira, and Simon Magus were baptized as well as the rest; How fondly then do many men mistake, deceiving and being deceived, dreaming that the effectual Grace of God is necessarily joyned to the outward administration of Baptism, and that being Converted and Regenerated already when Baptized, they need no more: But if this were so, then all that were baptized in their Infancy must necessarily be saved, because the promise of Pardon and Salvation is made to Conversion and Regeneration, and we need look no further to see our Names written in Heaven, but to search the Register and see whether we were Baptized, and the Certificate of our Baptism will be the surest evidence for Heaven, and we need only to cry God mercy and be absolved by the Minister at our Death, and we shall inherit the Kingdom of God. But let me tell you from the living God that whatever benefits you receive by Baptism,

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baptism, yet if when you come to years you be unholy, unclean, malicious, covetous, a scoffer, or the like, you cannot be saved except you be renewed again by repentance and a thorough and powerful change of your heart and life.

III. It is not Moral Righteousness that will evidence us to be Christians; we must exceed the Scribes and Pharisees; And though the blessed Apostle Paul before his Conversion says, that he was touching the Righteousness of the Law blameless, Phil. 3. So that none could charge him with the least immorality, and though the self justifying Pharisee could say I am no Extortioner, Adulterer, U just, &c. Luke 18. 11. yet this was not sufficient; Thou must have something more than all this to shew, or else God will not justify thee. I condemn not Morality, but we are not careful there. Piety includes Morality, as Christianity doth Humanity, and Grace includes Reason, but we must not divide the two Tables.

IV. External Conformity to the Rules of Piety is not enough to make us true Christians; Many have a Form of Godliness without the Power; they may pray long, fast often, bear gladly, and be very forward in the service of God, though costly and expensive, and yet be strangers to Christianity, and the divine Life; It will not be enough for them to plead at the great Day of Account, that they

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kept their Church, said their Prayers, received the Sacrament constantly, gave Alms, or the like; For there is no outward service but an Hypocrite may perform it, even to the giving all his goods to the poor and his body to be burned, 1 Cor. 13. 3.

V. A Seeming Conformity to the will of God, occasioned either by the restraints of humane Laws, Education, Afflictions or the like, can never give us assurance of eternal happiness; 'Tis too common and easy, to mistake Education for the Grace of God, but if this were true, who was a better man than Jehoash, who while his Uncle lived was very forward in Gods service, and calls upon him to repair the house of the Lord, 2 Kings 12. 2, 7. yet there was nothing but good Education all this while, for when his good Tutor was taken out of the way, he appears to have been only chained up, and presently falls to Idolatry; so in case of humane Laws and Afflictions, though men may seem very conformable while they are restrained by them, yet that being removed many throw off all, and commit iniquity with greediness.

Having briefly declared what true Christianity is not, I shall in short discover what it is; Conversion or true Religion consists in the thro' change both of the heart and life, by the Spirit of God, through the merits and Intercession of Jesus Christ; Where this is in truth,

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it goes throughout all the powers, principles and practices of a man; His mind is changed, and the scales of his natural ignorance fall off, so that God and his glory weigh down all carnal and worldly Interests, and he is turned from darkness to light. He that thought formerly there was little hurt in sin, now comes to see it to be the chief of evils; Heretofore he saw no form nor comeliness in his holy Redeemer that he should desire him, but now he finds him to be the hid Treasure, and the Pearl of price, for which he is willing to part with all, so purchase it. Now God is all to him, and he values his favour and the light of his countenance above all the good that he formerly inquired after, and set his heart upon. Let the world now present her self in all the glory of her Kingdoms, yet his Soul will prefer a naked, a crucified, a persecuted Christ before her, and he will cry out, The Lord is my portion saith my soul: Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee; God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.

He had rather be gracious than great, and had rather be the holiest man upon Earth, than the most learned the most famous or the most prosperous.

His Joys are changed, he now rejoiceth in the ways of Gods Testimonies more than in all

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Riches; He delights in the Law of the Lord, which he formerly had little Savour; He hath no such joy as in the thoughts of Christ and fruition of his company forever.

His cares and fears are altered, he was once careful about the things of this life, but now his great sollicitude is how to secure his Soul, and everlasting concerns; He used to fear nothing so much as the loss of his Estate, Reputation, Friends, or Pleasures. Nothing sounded so terrible to him as pain, poverty or disgrace; Now these are little to him in comparison with the dishonour and displeasure of God; It pierces his heart to think of losing Gods favour or of being parted from his blessed Saviour.

His love runs a new course and he (like the ancient Father) can scarce find words sweet enough to express his affections to his well beloved Jesus, "Let me see thee O Light of mine eyes; Come O thou joy of my Spirit. Let me behold thee O the gladness of my heart; Let me love thee O Light of my Soul; Appear unto me O my chief delight, my sweet Comforter; O my God, my Life, & the whole glory of my Soul, Let me find thee, O Desire of my heart; Let me hold thee O Love of my Soul, Let me embrace thee, and possess thee O heavenly Bride-groom.

His Sorrows have now a Vent by the view of his Sins, the sight of a Crucified Christ which  
did.



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did scarce move him before: but with such an affect his beauty, his hard bills, his anger against sin, all the faculties and members of his Soul and Body that were formerly instruments of sin are now become the holy altars of Christ's living Temple.

That eye which was once wandering, wanton, baughty, and covetous, is now employed (as Marys) weeping over his sins, in beholding God in his works, in reading his word, in searching for Objects of Charity and Mercy, and seeking all opportunities to do him service.

That ear that was opened to Satans call, and like a vitiated appetite, relished nothing better than filthy or at least frothy unprofitable discourse and the laughter of Fools, is now directed to hear the sweet voice of Jesus, and is open to his Teachings; it now says, Speak Lord, for thy Servant heareth, and waits for his word as the rain, which is sweeter to him than the honey and the honey comb, or his appointed food.

That head which was filled with carnal contrivances and designs, is now employed in matters of greater concern, and studies how it may perform the will of God; His thoughts are now more intent about his duty than his gain, and his principal business is how he may please God and avoid Sin.

His heart which was full of pollution and defilement, is now become an Altar of divine Incense,

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Incense, where the fire of Celestial Love is continually burning, and from whence the daily Sacrifice of Prayer and Praise, and the sweet perfume of holy Desires, Ejaculations and Soliloquies are constantly ascending.

His mouth is become a well spring of Life, his tongue is as choice Silver, & his lips feed many; Now the Salt of heavenly Grace hath seasoned his speech and purged out all his corruption; Hatb cleansed it from its former filth by communication, flattery, boasting, railing, lying, swearing, backbiting, which once issued out like flashes of infernal fire from the Hell that was in his heart.

His throat that was once an open Sepulchre, now sends forth the sweet breath of Prayer and holy Discourse, and the man speaks in another Tongue, even the language of Canaan, and is never so well pleased as when talking of God Christ, and the glorious things of another world. His mouth bringeth forth Wisdom, and his tongue is become the Silver Trumpet of his Makers Praise and Glory.

To conclude, his Conversation is in Heaven; and the New Man takes a new course, in his life and practice; when God hath given him the new heart, and writ his Law in his mind, he forthwith walks in his Statutes, and keeps his Judgments, and though sin, like a wearisome and unwelcome guest God knows, dwells in him, yet it hath no more dominion over him;

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He hath his fruit unto holiness, and though he hath many a fall, yet the Law and Life of Jesus is his Rule, and he hath an unfeigned respect to all Gods Commandments, and keepeth a good conscience willing in all things to live honestly and without offence towards God and Men.

In such a state as this no doubt, were those eminent Christians who made the following solemn Declarations, of the gracious Experiences which they had of the exceeding love & favour of God to their Souls in supporting them under their doubts and difficulties, and afterwards confirming their minds in the good ways of the Lord. They had found the Lord to be merciful and full of goodness, compassion and truth, and therefore thought that they ought with their mouths to shew forth his Praise, both to stir up others to joyne with them therein, and likewise to encourage poor, distressed, disconsolate Christians to put their trust in the Almighty. since if they persevere sincerely in seeking his face he will certainly at length discover himself unto them and fill their hearts with joy and gladness.

And it may be reasonably hoped that these heavenly Experiences will be very effectual and conducive therunto, since they consist of such variety of Tryals, Temptations and Exercises of Spirit, that we can scarce suppose but the most disquieted despairing Soul may here meet with  
cases

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Cases as dark and comfortable as his own, and  
and likewise find what a good end the Lord in  
his due time brought all the troubles of his af-  
flicted Children unto; And for this purpose  
no doubt they were first Collected and Publish-  
ed some years since by divers Faithful and Pi-  
ous Ministers of the Gospel, in and about Lon-  
don; and though they have omitted the Names  
of the Persons because no glorying should appear  
therein, yet they were then known to be Christi-  
ans who had truly tasted & seen that the Lord  
was gracious; Now that the God of all Peace  
and Consolation may give his blessing hereunto  
in the hearty and earnest Prayer and desire of  
himself, A wellwisher to the Souls of Men.

W. D.

Mercy

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## Mercy Triumphant in the Conversion of Sinners to God.

Discovered in the Remarkable and Gracious Experiences of several Eminent Christians.

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### 1. *Experiences of Mr. J. R. Minister of the Gospel.*

**B**Efore I give an account of my own Experiences, I shall briefly discover the Duty, and usefulness of communicating Christian Experiences.

1. It is a Duty, because it hath been the practice of the People of God in former Ages: When our blessed Saviour had cleansed the Leper, *Matth. 8. 4.* he bid him, Go, and shew it for a Testimony; and *Matth. 28. 7.* the Angels by *Mary Magdalen*, Go quickly and tell the Disciples that Christ whom they sought was risen; and *verse 10.* Christ meeting with the two *Marys*, renews the Precept, *Go tell my Brethren, &c.* For now ye know it, and have seen me, and can assuredly say that I am risen. And in *Joel 1. 3.* *Tell your Children, and let your Children tell their Children, and their Children another Generation.* And this is observed by the Jews at this day out of *Deut. 6. 7.* And to add more Solemnity to the commemoration of God's Law, and their deliverance from *Egypt*, they write it down in a piece of Parchment, and then rolling it up subscribe

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perscribe it, To the Lord, and fasten it to the Wall, or the Post of the Door on the right hand of the Entrance, and as often as they go in and out they touch, and kiss it with great affection and devotion: This, also is commanded, *Psal. 34. 8. Come taste and see that the Lord is good; and 1 Thes. 5. 11. Comfort your selves together, and edifie one another, even as also ye do.* And what is more excellent for edification and consolation, than to tell what God hath done for our Souls, whereby many who have met with the like, may be confirmed and comforted. David in *Psal. 16*, crys out, *I will tell of all thy wondrous works; and Psal. 66. 19. Come and hear (says he) all ye that fear the Lord, and I will declare what he hath done for my Soul; and verse 19. Verily God hath heard me, and hath not turned away his mercy from me. And Psal. 18. 30. The way of God is perfect (saith David.) How knowest thou this, David? Oh! says he, I have tried it; The Word of the Lord is tried; I can tell it by experience, and I know that he is a Buckler to all that trust in him. And Psal. 51. He promises, that as soon as his broken bones were healed, and the joy of his Salvation was restored to him, he would presently preach it, and teach transgressors Gods ways, and sinners should be converted unto him: He would give sinners warning of sin, and uncleanness, and tell them what it was to lie in hellish horrors, to have a wounded Spirit, an accusing Conscience, and the Indignation of an angry frowaing God. Thus also the Apostle speaks, *2 Cor. 5. 11. Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men: We tell them the sad condition they are in, now we are delivered out of it, on purpose to persuade them to believe in God, to get out of their carnal state, and to tast and see the mercy, grace, and love of God in Christ in the Gospel, and as*  
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the Apostle Peter says, 1 Pet. 2. 3. *If so be ye have tasted how gracious the Lord is:* O then you will say, It is good, it is sweet, and will encourage others to come and be made partakers thereof.

2. As this is a Duty, and hath been the practice of Primitive Times, so it is very useful and necessary for several Reasons. 1. It is a bearing the best outward Testimony to God and his Attributes that can be, when we can say by experience that God is gracious, loving, slow to anger, ready to forgive, that he is true and faithful, for we have tryed him, and therefore know it; and the want of this makes us so often question his care, truth, mercy and love to us in times of Tryal. 2. It is necessary to communicate Experiences, thereby to discover those that are sound Christians and sincere Believers, as far as may be judged by outward appearance, conversation, and communication. 3. It may be useful to prevent us from censuring, or having hard thoughts of those who are under spiritual Agonies, Afflictions and Temptations; all which our blessed Redeemer himself suffered, that he might be able to succour them that are tempted, Heb. 2. 18. So that when we see poor Souls set on the wrack, and roaring under torments, and crying out, Oh! they are damned, undone, forsaken of God, &c. Yet we ought not to condemn them, for even then they may be the dear Children of God, and may pass a wrong Sentence upon themselves, so long as they lie in despair, and under the sense of their own ruinous condition, till they find help and salvation in Jesus Christ; of which you may find divers Instances in the following Experiences. 4. By these Experiences we may learn how various the Lord is in his ways and workings; as the Apostle says, Heb. 2. 3. *God who at sundry times, and in divers manners shake*

*with the Fathers by the Prophets, &c.* To some he comes in one way, like a Lion, and to some in another, like a Lamb; to some by sickness, to others by crosses and losses; to some by Sermons, and to others by Reading the Scriptures, Christian Converse and the like. Again, to some the Lord discovers himself in an extraordinary way, as in Dream, Trance, Voice or Vision; but neither these, nor the ordinary manifestations of God's Love are to be regarded, unless they are confirmed by the Scriptures, and the Promises therein; and unless they also make the person more holy, humble, and meek in his own Eyes, and more to admire the Free Grace of God to him a poor unworthy sinner; and the Lord knows what means is most proper, for that which will work upon one man, may have no operation upon another. 1. Experiences do oblige and allure Christians exceedingly, to rely upon God, and to believe in him. For, as David says, *Psal. 124. 1, 2. I cry, I rent night and day for destruction; but what Argument doth he use! see verse 4, 5. Our Fathers trusted in thee, they trusted, and thou didst deliver them; they cryed unto thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. Therefore deliver me too, for I trust in thee. So Psal. 31. 24. Be strong and courageous, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord; even as he hath strengthened my heart, and heard my voice and cry (as in the verses before) so he will yours, O all ye Saints! Thus the Woman of Samaria, John 4. 28, 29. ran into the City, and declared her Experiences of the Messiah that was come, and how he told her all things, &c. And observe how this weak means wrought upon many; for, verse 29. it is said, That many of the Samaritans believed in him, because of the sayings of the par. 11. man. And thus Jesus professeth,*



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feleeth, that the very first thing which converted him from Atheism, and made him believe in God, was a Conference with a poor Country-man near Florence in Italy.

There are many other benefits that arise from Christians communicating their Experiences of the favour, love, and goodness of God towards them; some being informed, others confuted, others comforted, and confirmed in the good ways of the Lord; so that it is to be wisht, that this Christian duty were more practised, whereby others might be encouraged to trust in God, by hearing what he hath done for our Souls. I shall add no more, but proceed to give an account of the wonderful dealings of the Almighty with my unworthy self.

**T**O give a formal Account of my Life would be tedious, though I may safely say, in every year since I can remember, I have been insight with so many and such remarkable Experiences, as may make some rather admire than believe them: And first, when I was a School-Boy at *Malden* in *Essex*, I began to be roused by two Men, Mr. *Will. Fenner*, and Mr. *Stephen Marshall*, about the tenth year of my Age; for before that, I was I know not what, though I was kept to read every day, was catechised, with other good Orders: But then hearing Mr. *Fenner* full of Zest, and seeing him thundering about, and beating the Pulpit, I was amazed, and thought he was mad, wondering what he meant: Now whilst I was gazing upon him, I was suddenly struck, and perceived it was we that were mad, which made him seem to be so: Oh! says he, 'You knotty, rugged, proud pieces of flesh, you stony, rocky, flinty, hard hearts, what will you do when you are roaring in Hell among the damned, you?' This made me at first astonish'd, and run so often

in my mind afterward, that I began to be troubled, scared, and affrighted, and for fear of going to Hell, I fell to praying, hearing Sermons, reading the Scriptures morning and evening, though I understood little, but only thought the bare reading sufficient: I learnt to pray first out of Books, and got all the Graces, so called, by heart; and after Family Prayers, I was every night afraid the Devil would carry me away to Hell, if I did not say my prayers, *Our Father, &c.* and *I believe in God, &c.* with the Ten Commandments and my little Catechism of Dr. Hall's, which I had learnt: And this I did duly every night before I durst sleep, which I thought a sufficient defence to preserve me from the Devil's tearing me in pieces before morning. Yet sometimes when I was sleepy, to make more haste, I would say some of them in the Chimney-corner whilst I was undressing me; thinking all was well enough, so it were but done: Yea, when I was extremely surprized with fear of the Devil, being apt to fancy any thing to be him, I often said all my Prayers and Commandments twice over, suspecting I had not said them well enough, or had for haste left out some of them, and the like; and thus as the Apostle says, *When I was a Child, I did childish things*, and thought all this was very well; and oft-times I would get one of my Play-fellows to walk alone with me, and would tell him of Sin and Hell, and such matters, for they ran always in my mind, and I was in a desperate fear.

At length going to hear Mr. Marshall, whilst I was nodding, and almost asleep, his powerful voice awakaped me, thundring in my Ears the dreadful danger of such as were drowne, and slept, and slumbered away their Salvation, which I thought was spoken directly to me, and had such prevalence upon me, that I started up with an aking heart,

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heart, being much terrified at his words, which he still pursued, and wounded me to the heart, when he told us; 'That when time was past, it could never be recalled again, and that there was no other way but to double our diligence, and redeem the time we had lost by making more haste, and taking more care and pains, or else we should be utterly lost and undone: This touched me sufficiently, so that I could not forbear weeping extremely: After Sermon I went home, and sitting alone, I fell to crying and complaining that I had lost my time, taking up a resolution never to sleep at Church again, and I think I have kept that solemn Covenant to this very day.

After this, I was not content with my former customary duties, for now I must double them, and do more than before; wherefore I resolved to write down the Sermons I heard, as well as I could, but having little skill to write fast or orderly, I ever observed the Doctrines, Reasons and Heads of the Uses, which I got by heart, repeating the morning Sermon at noon, and the evening Sermon at night, so that I could the readilier answer my Father when he examined me; and then I learnt out of a Book a prayer for morning, and another for evening: This course I continued for nine or ten years together, so that at length I attained to repeat to my self the substance of some Sermons which I had heard seven or eight years before; and the Lord led me on in this orderly way (I know not how) without the advice or direction of any person upon Earth, whereby I hoped to work out my Salvation, and redeem my time. But this I must say, from this Form I learnt much of God and Goodness; and what I did at first for fear of Hell, at last I performed out of love to Heaven, yea out of love to God and Christ, as if it were without Heaven.

Heaven. I used this method some years after I came to the University of *Cambridge* whereby I was enabled to recollect several Mens Sermons 40 years after they were Preached, and likewise with Gods assistance to Preach my self, at 18. or 19. years of age, to the great wonder of many.

Thus you hear how formal I was, and I must needs confess it was more out of fear than love that I maintain'd this strictness in the duties of Religion; But not long after I was further awakened by my own Father Mr. W. R. Minister in *Essex* who preaching upon the Good Samaritan, and shewing Christs Compassion to wounded Souls he in reproof of Sinners declared, "That they were more guilty than the hardhearted Jews, that they Crucified Christ afresh, and have no Compassion on him now he is in Glory, but Spit on him, and make him Suffer, and that his blood would rise up in Judgment against them, for if *Abels* a meer mans did so, much more his, and if *David* prayed to be delivered from blood guiltiness, how ought we to beg of God to be freed from being guilty of the precious blood of the Son of God and Saviour of the World. This he Preached and pressed so powerfully, that I was thrown into a trembling, as lying under the guilt of Christs blood, and was long perplexed with the horror thereof.

One Remarkable Passage I must never forget which happened in my Youth, that being one time playing and running about my Father's house, with my other Companions, I know not upon what occasion, I uttered vain words, crying, O Lord, which we were not suffered to do, whereupon my heart was instantly smitten and I was suddenly set a running by I know not what Power or Spirit, as if I had been possesst, and could not possibly stay my self till I was carried with much violence to a little gate way.

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way, where to my apprehension I perceived, as plainly as ere, I saw any thing by the Sun-shine, a naked Sword glittering with a sharp edge, which took up the whole space of the Gate from one Post to the other with a broad blade most keen and cruel; at which sad sight, being almost distracted with fear, I shriekt out, yet had not the least power to stop, but was forcibly carried toward it, so that the edge of the threatening blade meeting with my Body, it seemed to me impossible that I should escape death, and I made no other account but to be quite off, and parted asunder; but afterwards being harried through with that irresistible force, I had strength to stay a little beyond it, and to contemplate the desperate peril that I was in; I stood as one amazed, and scarce knew whether I were alive or dead, yea I could hardly believe my self to be any thing but a dead man, or at least mortally and deadly wounded, if not woefully and deplorably cut in twain. Oh! how I stood trembling and turmoiled in my thoughts, until after some time the Vital blood which was retired for the hearts defence, began to disperse and circulate in its former course, and then I lookt about, and turned to the gate way, but the appearance was passed away, the Sword gone and vanished, whilst I was left alone (the rest running away) in a Labyrinth of fears, griefs, and doubts, free from any wound without, but deeply and woefully wounded within, and never since to the praise of Gods grace as I know of, have I made such vain and irreverent mention of the name of the Lord. But good God! what was thy will herein? Thou who art not tyed to means or order, best orderest and disposest of all things for thine own design and glory! and so this was I am sure, but what it was I know not; yet it left a lasting impression upon me, and the Scar is still to be seen

be seen in my heart, though the wound be healed.

But alas! how long and lamentably did I lye afflicted, and in continual fears after this? Every Thunder and Lightning I lookt upon as fatal to me, and sent to destroy me, and then I would fall to my prayers, and saying my Creed and Commandments, and to my Sermons as fast as I could, that I might be found well doing at least, if not as a Charm to preserve me, or a challeng to God by virtue of them to keep and defend me; And I remember it was a great comfort to me to consider that others did not do as I did, but that they altogether slighted holiness, prayer, &c. and lived wickedly and carnally, in drunkenness, disobedience, Sabbath-breaking, and other sins every day; this I was so far from grieving at and weeping over, that I, in my heart, rejoiced in it, as having more hopes, and fancying my self to be in a better condition than they, and therefore should have more favour from the hand of God; but all this while, (like an *Israelite in Egypt*) I work't for life, and my Services were my Saviours, and I would often take occasion to discourse with my Brothers, Sisters, and School-fellows, about Heaven and Hell, and what a hard thing it was to be saved.

Being at *Malden* in *Essex* some time after, I had a certain Dream which seemed afterward fulfilled; It was about the time when the *Spaniards* and *Hollanders* had a Sea-fight in the *Duyns*, which I hearing some talk of, it filled me with fears, and the following night I dreamed that I saw fire rained, or rather powred down round about, and looking where I was, I thought my self to be without the Coach yard Gate of my Fathers house; I was much affrighted to see nothing but fire on every side of me, and looking upward and about me, praying earnestly

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earnestly for Deliverance, none came nigh me by a good space, though flaming in all places else, so that I could see none exempted; wherefore being afflicted for my Father and our Family, I fell on my knees, to ask mercy for them, and continued praying a long while before I could be heard; but at last, I thought I was bid to arise and look, and then the Fire seemed not to fall so fast on my Father's House as before, but abated by little and little, till I awaked. Now though this Dream seized much upon my Spirits for the present; yet I accounted it only a fancy, till about six years after meeting with Dr. *Dutton* in the Isle of *Ely*, and repeating it to him, he declared to me, that for several Reasons which he gave, this must be more than a mere Dream or working of fancy, and that something would happen which this did prefigure, instancing in some of the like kind which himself, his Wife, and others had met with, as warnings and predictions; and therefore he withheld me by no means to slight or contemn it, because he was confident it did preface some fiery and angry Dispensation upon our Family, and that my Father and the rest, would fall under some trouble by the times or otherwise, and my self should be free, and at liberty to pray for them; and that by degrees, they should be brought out, and the Fire abated; this interpretation which he gave more fully, was for the most part verified some years after.

But all this while I was labouring for Heaven, in an exceeding formal way, and did much covet to know the things of God, and therefore often wished that I were a Minister, such a one as Mr. *Fennier*, Mr. *Marshall*, Mr. *Hosker*, my Father, or some other Eminent Preacher, that so I might attain to their Knowledge, and then I thought I should do

more abundant Service for God (as if the Lord were beholding to me for my obedience) and should the more easily and surely obtain Salvation; thus I poor Creature continued for several years together, keeping many fast Days by my self, Heard, Read, Sung Psalms, Meditated, used Soliloquies, and prayed many times a day, and what not, and yet at last sunk into the depth of despair, what by the often thoughts of Hell, in reading Drexelius upon Eternity, and then thinking of the Endless, Easeless, and Remediless Torments of the Damned; what by frequent Frights as before; and what by my Father once preaching on the Parable of the Fool in the Gospel, Luke 12. 20. *Thou Fool, this Night will I take away thy Soul, then whose shall these things be that thou hast provided.* From whence he discovered the unaccountable folly of Men, to lay up the Trifles of this World, and forget Heaven. That Eternal Happiness is not to be obtained upon a Down Bed, nor without much pains and care, since our Blessed Lord tells us, that many strive hard to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, and shall not be able, and that, *Except our Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Matth. 5. 20.* what with these and other things, I was almost thrown into the bottomless abyss of Desperation; I took the Bible to look these Scriptures, and read them over, and over again, but the more I read, the more I was filled with Horror, and roared for Grief, being sunk so deep into the black gulf of Despair, that to myself and others, I seemed past recovery; I Prayed, Fasted, Mourned, got into corners, yea many times, being ashamed my case should be openly known, I run into Barns, Stables, Out-Houses, any where, pretending I had business, on purpose



*in the Conversion of Sinners to God.* 13

purpose to Pray, Sigh, Weep, striking my Breast, and cursing the hour that I was born; wishing that I were a Stone, any thing but what I was, for fear of Hell and the Devils, whom I thought I often saw in several ugly shapes and forms; sometimes fancying them to have great rolling Eyes like Sawcers, with Sparkling Firebrands in one hand, and with the other reaching at me, to tear me away to Torments: Oh! the leaps that I have made, the frights that I have had, the fears that I was in, which continued off and on many years.

To these inward Tortures, I had the addition of many sore outward Afflictions, which much heightened my Sorrows, being often (doubtless I might deserve it too to much) beaten, bruised, turned out of Doors, kickt about, and most severely and unkindly used. At which times I should be Tempted to Murther my self; and sometimes to think I could not belong to God; for if I did, he would not endure to see me thus used and Afflicted, who did always fly to him, and prayed, and prayed, and prayed, but I had as good speak to a post, for I was not Relieved; other times I should read and weep, and (as my usual manner was, in the time of my great Despair) would fall flat all along, with my face on the ground, and cry, and sigh and weep, and call for help, but the Lord's time was not yet come to answer; I often wept half, and sometimes a whole Night together, watering my Bed with my Tears, for fear of Hell and the Devil, because of my Sins, and Rebellious Disobediences; I always Slept with my Hands clasped together, that so if I should dye, or that the Devil should prey upon me, I might be found in a praying posture, sleeping as well as waking; and for five or six years together, I never durst go to sleep in any other manner.

But the greatest blow I met with, was from the Scripture afore mentioned, *Matth. 5. 20.* Surely, thought I, it is but in vain to strive against the Stream, if I must exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees; for I had often read of their strictness in their Houses, Synagogues, and Schools; that the most ordinary among them, repaired three or four times a day to their Devotions, namely, in the Morning, at Sunrising, at the fourth hour of the Day, in the Afternoon, and in the Evening, and so in a manner, were all day long in Devotion; besides Laudatory Prayers and Thanks, not only for all the Mercies they daily receive, but upon every extraordinary occasion, and in every action; a prayer for every time they eat, they would not drink without a prayer; a prayer for every good smell; a prayer when they wash, &c. a prayer upon every new thing they had, and what not? Insomuch that some of their Rabbies Write, they used at least an Hundred and-eight Prayers or Benedictions every day; I had likewise read, how strict they were on their Sabbaths, they would not gather wood, not kill a flie or flea, not dress any Provisions, not make a Fire, not Write, nor cancel any Writing, not quench a Fire, not handle nor touch any Money, hammer, Tool, or other Instrument, not bear any weight or burden, not eat of any thing dressed, nor any Fruits gathered on that Day, not wear any thing that day, but just necessary Apparel, not speak of Worldly matters, as Buying, Selling, Giving, Taking, nor make any Bargains; Nay, on the Friday before Sunset, all Worldly things were laid aside, and they began their Sabbath.

Now these and the like considerations, made me think it was in vain to seek to be saved, and to no more purpose than to beat the Wind, or Build

*in the Conversion of Sinners to God.* 15

in the Air; for if the Scriptures were true, I could never attain thereunto, since I judged it impossible for me to exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees; so that after serious deliberate Debates in my own Soul about my lamentable condition, I lay under the severest sense and sentence of this Scripture, which at length heightened and increased my despair to such a degree that I could take no comfort; and I was so wretched, as to account the God of Mercy most cruel, in exacting impossibilities of Men, by requiring them to exceed such Righteousness, and to let so many be Damned, because they could not go beyond it. Oh! such hard thoughts had I of God; At length I was Tempted not to Pray, Read, Hear, or do any Duties at all; for I thought it impossible after all to be Saved, and so would deny all; sometimes I was Tempted to think there was no God, but that all things came by Nature; yea, so wicked was I, as to challenge God, if there were a God, to give me some sign, or certain proof thereof. In a word, my troubled Thoughts rose to such a height, that I did not only Despair, but began to be Distracted, and out of my Wits; sometimes I thought Trees to be good and bad Angels, and looked upon Bushes as Dens of Devils; I sat up whole Nights in a little Turret in the Orchard, Studying, Singing, Whistling, Hollowing, and drawing Figures, or else walking in the Fields, or other Solitary places, talking to my self, speaking to Trees as to Men, or as to Angels, or Gods; and thinking the least whistling of the Wind, or chirping of a Bird, or lowing of a Beast, to be some answer sent to me: As these Distractions increased, I could not avoid the forcible Temptations of a Furious Devil, making me sometimes whet a Knife, take a Billet, or some other thing to Murder my

self or others, or indeed all, for my thoughts I would have all to have gone my way; many ways I tryed to do mischief, but was always prevented, till at last I was taken and bound hand and foot, and held fast in my Bed, while the raging Fits went over; and then when I was tyred and patient yet if let go, without a watchful Eye, the first thing I went about would be, without speaking a word, to seek for a Knife, or to get to the Window, to cast my self down Headlong; so that I was often strangely and almost miraculously preserved even in the very Act and instant of time, when a few Minutes longer had been too late to save my Life.

I should not be so long in this History, but that I dare hide nothing wherein God hath appeared my God for his own Glory, in what I am now by Grace; and therefore as things Eminent are brought to Memory, I am bold to declare them, for the Magnifying of the alone love, and Riches of God's Mercy in Jesus Christ. I dare boldly say, few that saw me in those headlong distempers, did think me at the best, fit for any place but Bedlam, or did believe I should ever be restored to what I am, and this was also very strangely. For as my distracted Fits abated, they then turned more to inward Malady and Malancholy, so that I continually cryed out, I am Damn'd, I am Damn'd, I am sure I cannot be saved, it is impossible, Oh I have Hell, Hell Fire about me, the Devils are tearing me, and I thought I heard the Damned roaring and raving, and saw them, was it were, Roasting and Frying in Everlasting Torments, and my whole Soul was swallowed up with their Howlings, and Screechings. In this Deplorable condition, I lay several days and nights, untill at length I was fully perswaded and convinced, that there

was a God, that this God was Righteous, and that he would hear my Prayers, if I continued calling upon him, and crying to him with Importunity without ceasing; seeing the unjust Judge that we read of in Scripture, was prevailed upon by the Importunities of the poor Widdow;

Hereupon having gathered together those scattered Relicks of Reason that were left me, I took up a Resolution, that I would continue in Prayer, and so I did, though by fits I was froward, and rude, and mild, and I know not how, sometimes scarce eating a bit of Bread in five days together; after which I was in another form and frame of spirit, (though by turns, full of Distraction and Desperate thoughts) I grew more Serious, and began to weigh things, as in a Ballance, and to Expostulate with the Lord, and to Pray by fits most furiously, and now and then the Tears which were before dried up, began to Trickle and Rowl down my Face, like swollen drops of Blood:

Thus I continued three or four days, till one Afternoon coming into the Chamber, my Heart being as big and full as it could hold, I threw my self flat on my face as usually, striking on the Boards, and crying to the Lord for Deliverance, and using such extravagant Expressions as might discover that I was in Despair; then standing up, I walked a turn or two saying, is there not a God? Is he Gracious? Are the Scriptures false? Canst thou take delight to see a poor Soul thus set on the Rack, Sighing and Roaring in Torment? Rise up and appear for thy self, thou Great God, shew thy self Gracious in one Act of Mercy, in deliverance of all the Devils in Hell; Then beating my Breast, and tearing my Hair, I threw my self on the Bed, whilst my Eyes were glazed, and brim full with Tears; There I lay till a sudden sleep

seized upon me, and I dreamed of the same Scripture that had been a killing Letter to me, which now through the Spirit of Christ quickned me, whereby I was made sensible that Christs Righteousness being by Faith, made mine, did exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, and that except I, in and by the Righteousness of Christ made mine, did excell their Righteousness, I could not be Saved. When I awaked, I was so much changed, that I was amazed at my self, at the suddenness of it; for I dreamt I was comforted, and that my Heart was filled with Joy, and when I awaked, it was so indeed; I started up, and rebuked my self saying, why am not I damned? VVhat's the matter? VVhy am I so filled with a fancy, and with a suddain hope of I know not what, nor whence; I then fell to pray, and whilst I was praying, I said, Lord is this true? Say Lord is it true? If it be so, discover it to me, confirm me in it; at length I was perswaded that the Righteousness of Christ was mine, that this Garment was provided for such poor, naked, torn Creatures as I was; whereupon I took the Bible, and found several Scriptures which seemed to confirm the same to me, and I was filled with Divine infusions, and immediate Resolutions agreeable to the will of God given out there, and then I began to breath upon it, and pause a little, and by degrees to revive and look up with some hope, till the Lord satisfied me by revealing to my Heart, that Christs Righteousness was my only Justification, and that therein I did exceed all Pharisaical Righteousness; whereby I had comfortable hopes of Salvation, in and through Jesus Christ, from that very same Scripture, which did before condemn me.

After this I began plainly to perceive, why my  
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my self and so many others were so long and lamentably lost in Despair, that it was because we sought for Justification in a wrong place, and were therefore in the wrong way to Salvation; just as if a Man should dig in his Garden for a Mine of Gold; no wonder that we lose our labour at last, after Sweating, Tears, Prayers, Cares, Pains, Fears and all, seeing we look in a wrong place. Thus was it with me, all the while I was looking and poring, and perplexing my self for a Righteousness of my own, and to seek in my self to exceed the Scribes and Pharisees, Alas! I was lost, undone, and could not find it, nor see any door of Hope set open for my Soul, till Christ in his Righteousness was Revealed in me; and then I knew him to be a Saviour. Well, with this Joy I have continued to this Hour, holding and keeping my ground against all Temptations, with great numbers of which I have been Assaulted ever since, and such as have been scarce heard of. For after I had Solemnized, and Celebrated my New Life (begun in anothers Righteousness, and another self) by composing and singing of Psalms, Hymns, Spiritual Songs, and continual open-hearted returns of Praises to my self, whilst the Angels seemed to rejoyce with me; yet Satan my constant and unwearied Enemy, began now to muster up afresh more troubles against me, and to follow me with an Host of Afflictions and Tryals, as *Pharaoh* followed *Israel*, with a purpose to destroy them, when once out of his Territories; but my God whom I unfeignedly serve from my Soul, did deliver me, does deliver me, and I trust will deliver me, as the Apostle says, *1 Cor. 1.*

For though Satan laid many Snares, and so beset me about, that it seemed scarce possible I should escape; yet the Lord set me at liberty, from the

Snares of the Fowler, though sometimes so subtilly planted, that I could not discern them; and what he could not do by Inimities and Subtilties, and with inward Motions and Temptations, he tryed to compass by Violence, in Tormenting me, and making me a miserable Object of Affliction and Sorrow. For now my Friends became mine Enemies, and my preciseness was an eyefore to many. My near Relations cast me off, and I was lookt upon as disobedient, for keeping company with such Godly Men, as were then called Puritans and Roundheads, and for Praying and holding Communion with them, though commanded to the contrary; at length I found so little love from some, and so much malice from others, that I was turn'd out of Doors, and was forc't to seek my Fortune, as they say, and to fly with my own Feathers, having not above three Shillings in my Pocket, to Travel up and down with in strange Countries in the midst of VVinter, so that I was often up to the knees in Snow, whilst the very Iicles hung on my Hair and Cheeks, which a shewes of Tears would sometimes thaw, falling abundantly from me in the open Fields and High-ways, where none but God was witness of them. I many times used to beg at poor Houses and Cottages, that I might come in to warm and dry me, or for a draught of small Beer, which would make some poor Souls fall a weeping to see me. After many dangers and troubles, I footed it as far as Cambridge, where I sought from one Colledge to another, to be but a Stacer or poor Scholler, my little stock of Money being all gone; but the Servitors of Kings-Colledge, of which I was one before, being dismissed, I could get no place, and I had no Money and want'd Bread, insomuch that I was forced for Life to try all things, and to eat Leather old quill,  
and



and pens, which I pickt up out of the dust and dunghills, and roasted in a few Coals, which were left in the Chamber where I was; yea, at length I tryed to eat Grass, and did it, and my Drink was only fair water; nay, I grew to that height of Penury and Famine, that I tryed to eat my own Fingers, biting them till I could endure it no longer; then tearing my Hair, and crying, I had recourse to Prayer, whereby my Passion would sometimes be allayed for the present.

This continued so long, that I met with Temptations in this Wilderness, to try to turn Stones into Bread; the Devil often Tempted me to study Necromancy, Magick, Conjurat[i]on or the Black Art, as it is called, and to make a League with him, and then I should never want, but have Bags of Gold and Silver, and be owned by my Friends, and Honoured of all Men, and return home with great Respect and Riches; yet the Lord would not suffer me to hearken to him, but to Resist and tell him; 'Thou art a Lyar from the beginning, away 'thou Malicious Accuser of the Brethren, Tempt 'me not, for thou didst do thus to my Blessed 'Lord and Master Jesus Christ; but he overcame 'thee, and so I trust shall I by his Strength and 'Power; Then I Prayed and Read the Scriptures, and VVrit Holy Meditations, and Soul Soliloquies on the 88 Psalm, with severall other Divine Contemplations upon *Dides* and *Laxares*, &c. all in Verse, very Pathetical and Tragical, suitable to my condition under severall Temptations; so that instead of Astrological and Magical Studies, I bent my mind to Sacred Meditations, Soul Comfortings, Angelical and Evangelical Contemplations; yet I continued under strong Temptations, but to the praise of God I speak it, I think I was never more growing Christian, then after Satan had theses Repulses.

But

But I must not omit to declare, that I had one dreadful Temptation first, which was almost irrecoverable, had I not been prevented wonderfully, even as I was upon the Execution thereof. For finding myself almost starved to Death, my strength near gone, my Eyes sunk deep in my Head, and my Face wearing Deaths Colours, I was almost at my wits end. I confess when I felt a violent Passion or Fit coming upon me, I would fall to Prayer, Reading, or the like, whereby sometimes they were past by, and I had much comfort; but yet I could not always avoid them; for now a terrible Temptation got ground of me, coming on audaciously, growing so strong upon me, and following me so close, that I could not escape it. I took up the Skin of my wasted Hand and Arms, with a resolution to tear it off for anger, Satan having so besotted me that I could see no way to evade Death; I had been beholden to all the Scholars that I found courteous, to bring me Scraps, Skins of salt Fish, or any other Vittuals in their Handkerchiefs or Pockets, which kept me alive a while, till at last they all grew weary, and I was almost pined to Death, and ashamed to beg publickly, and utterly blinded as to any way whereby to recover my self out of this condition; wherefore after violent and never ceasing Temptations, I drew my Knife, whetted it sharp, opened my Doublet and Shirt, and in the midst of the Room where I was alone, I kneeled down to Prayer, to surrender up my Soul into the Hands of God; my Knife lay by me ready, and I was prepared for the Act, when behold a Door which I thought bolted the Night before, yet was only shut too, was now opened by a Scholar, which with the Screeking of it made me start up, and hastily throw my Knife in the Chimney, being much ashamed of what I was going to do; in comes the

the Scholar and tells me of a place in *Huntingtonshire*, to Teach Gentlemens Children, and how one of our Colledge was sent to, and refused it :

By this means I was recovered out of this imminent Danger, and after the Scholar was gone, did exceedingly reprove and check my self for suffering this Temptation to grow so upon me for want of Faith, and was much afflicted at it, and the more because this Mercy came in so seasonably upon it ; Oh that I could not wait upon God ; at night after Prayer, I went as usually, supperless to Bed, and then my Heart melted into abundance of Tears ; first for the sin that I was about to commit, and that I could not Believe, and Resist the Devil, as I had done in God's strength before ; and then for the Love of God, and his Fatherly care appearing for me at that instant, when I took no care at all, but had Devoted my self to Death, that at this very Moment he should not only deliver me, but send me News full of Hopes ; Oh ! how did these things break my Heart, and work upon me most part of the night, untill with an Heart full, and Head full, and Eyes full and all, I fell into a deep sleep ; and was visited with an extraordinary Token from on High, both in Dream and Vision, which I imagine was afterward accomplished.

The Dream was this ; that I was walking home to my Fathers House, with a Staff in my Hand, and fearing I should be out of the way, I lookt carefully for the path, which at first I could scarce discern, and began to look about and question it, till at length I perceived the footsteps of some who had gone that way, hereupon I proceeded, and the farther I went, the plainer I found it to be a path, and that I was in the right way, since I could see no other ; at which I rejoiced, and went

went on confidently, as if I feared no Evil nor Enemy, till I came to a Fine, Glorious, Beautiful House, and Building on the left hand of me, out of which issued forth a Beam that reached cross the way I was to go in, so that I was at a little stand at the first; yet would not stoop under this Beam, but stept aside, and so passed away, laying my Hand thereon, as I stept by the side of it; when suddenly I thought the House was all in a flame, at which I was something troubled, passing on the way, and wondring in my self what this should be, till I was overtaken by some rude Malicious Men, who accused me for setting this House on Fire, and would not hear me speak, but were violently haling me away to Prison, with which being sufficiently affrighted, and my flesh set a Trembling, I awaked, and was offended with my self, for being so much concerned at a foolish Dream and Fancy; so it being yet dark, I laid me down and fell asleep again, and wast cast into the same Dream again exactly; and at my Right Hand, I thought there was a Grave Ancient Man, full of white Hairs like Wool, and a long white Beard, who stood by me and said, 'Chear up, fear not, for the Lord hath sent me to comfort thee, and to tell thee that he hath chosen thee to Preach his Word, and the Gospel of Christ, which is the Staff thou hadst in thine Hand, and with this Staff, which is the Word of God, thou shalt walk home to thy Fathers House in Heaven, where is fullness of Joy; but after a time, thou wilt be troubled with the different opinions and ways of Men, and seem at first to be at a loss, yet the Lord will be thy Guide; Go on, and as thou goest forward, the way of the Lord will still appear plainer before thine Eyes; the footsteps thou sawest are the Examples of the Saints that

that have gone before you, which will be a great help to you, and you shall walk chearfully on in the way which is clear to you, and shall see no other; but yet you must meet with the fair House on the left Hand, that is, the Glory and Great ones of the World, who make a great and fair shew to Men, as if built High; but they must fall, and are only on the left Hand of you, whilst you will Despise and Preach against them, and turn your Eye forward, to go in the way of God without turning about. By the Beam that came out of this House, is meant the Powers and Opinions of these, who when you shall cross or step aside, or will not stoop under them, they are set on fire, and inflamed on a sudden; but be not troubled, go forward, although they send after you, saying, you have brought this fire upon them, and though they falsely accuse you, and seek to hawl you to Prison for this fact, whereof you are altogether Innocent. At which I awaked again, it being about Day-break, wondering with my self what it should mean, and verily believing it to be more than ordinary, and being filled with confidence and comfort, I rose up and writ it down presently. Next day I went away towards *Huntington-Shire*, where I was accepted and entertained, and had a comfortable Maintenance for severall years.

But after all these Deliverances, I Multiplied abundantly in Gifts and Graces, either to Pray, Expound, Read, Sing Hymns, and Spiritual Songs with the Spirit, and Understanding; and as *Israel*, *Exod. 1.* the more he was Afflicted, he Multiplied the more; so, Blessed be the Lord, I was the more filled with the Spirit, endued with strength and grace, and refreshed with Peace and Joy, the more I had suffered; so that all my troubles were through

through Grace, but as *Joseph* step, to Higher Enjoyments; and finding the Lord so abundantly to endue me from above, and to Qualifie me for the Call that I had before in the Night for the Ministry, ( which I little thought or imagined could have come to pass, my Friends having often resolved on the contrary ) and all things so fairly concurring, I was much confirmed, that the Lord had designed me thereunto; and not long after I was by a Godly People earnestly importuned, and at length prevailed with to Preach the Gospel, and was soon known about the Country; so although I have ever since met with several Afflictions, Oppositions, and Troubles, yet many have given Testimony to the Word I have Preached in divers places, the Lord be praised, to the great refreshing of my Soul, and toward the filling up of my Joy, when I shall give an account to their comfort at the Great Day of the Lord.

After this, I was sent forth as a Pastor and publick Teacher by the Church, and I know my Ministerial Commission and Authority to be from God; and notwithstanding the divers Temptations I still meet with, finding my Heart full of Corruption, and my Life a continual Warfare, yet I bless God ( who hath delivered me in divers ways which I have not here declared, from the Fraudulent Gins and Snares of the Devil, and who hath called me out of Darkness into Light ) that his power is stronger in me than any that hath been against me; and I am the better provided against Satan, because I now live by Faith in the Son of God, above the Letter in the Life, above the Form in the Power, above self in an higher self, where I have my aboad, so that I am not I; but by the Grace of God it is, that I am what I am; I have Provision within, seeing Christ in me

is the hope of Glory; and I do certainly expect Salvation in Christ Jesus, my Head, my Lord, my Elder Brother, and the first Fruits of them that Rise again. And although I meet with daily Trials at Home and Abroad, within and without, yet I am all the time ascending to Heaven, the same way that Christ my Redeemer went, *Who hath, through the Nail, Consecrated a New and living way for me into the Holy of Holies.* I can comfortably Drink after my Saviour out of his own Cup; and in eating his Meat, and drinking his Drink, I can take Gall and Vinegar, as well as Milk and Honey, and I account the enjoyment of Christ, to be the enjoyment of all the Excellencies and Happiness in Heaven and Earth; neither do I doubt but I shall appear perfect in his Righteousness, being pardoned by his Death, purged by his Blood, Sanctified by his Spirit, and Saved by his Power, and to be Glorified, as he is Glorified, and see him as he is; and whilst I Live and Breathe, I hope and Resolve to live to him, and for him, as well as by him, and I shall not desire to live one minute longer, than it may be for his Honour, Glory, and Service, which I beseech the Lord of Heaven to make me fit for, and faithful in, and to prepare my Soul for that Glory, which is to be Revealed. J. B.

II. Experiences of R. W.

I will declare what the Lord hath done for me; First in my Youth, my Father being a Godly Man in Dublin in Ireland, brought up his Children very Religiously; but for my part, though I were well Educated and Instructed, yet I was very Disobedient, being young and Headstrong, and refusing to hearken to my Fathers Advice which he often gave me, but I regarded it not; which was afterward a very great grief to me, for I could not endure to be curbed, nor kept in, but at length

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to avoid the continual Reproofs which he justly gave me, for my ill courses and company, I resolved not to stay at home any longer, but to go into *Flanders*; accordingly I put out to Sea, but by Storms and contrary Winds, was driven back again; yet I could not see the Hand of God in this, but still held on my purpose, and took the first opportunity to get away out of *Ireland* into *England*, where my Friends used many Arguments to perswade me to return home again. Whilst I continued in *England*, I began to be convinced, by hearing several good Men, of the heinousness of my sins, and wicked disobedience, and was thereupon sadly afflicted and disconsolate, so that I could have no quiet nor rest.

In this time my Father hearing where I was, (not knowing before what was become of me, doubting I might be dead or drowned) writ a Letter to me, wherein I was admonished to beware of such as run headlong to Perdition, with many other good advices, he seeming like old *Jacob*, to rejoyce that his Son was yet alive, &c. All these things struck me heavily to the Heart, so that I lay long under the fearful Sentence of my Iniquities and Disobedience, and could receive no comfort nor satisfaction. I concealed this my inward Grief and Torment, till my Heart was ready to burst, but at length acquainted my Friends therewith, who endeavoured to comfort me, and I had some quiet for a short space; but this lasted not, so that I soon fell again into my old malady and trouble as before, being so exceedingly disturbed that I could by no means obtain any peace, till that Scripture came into my mind, *Isa.* 50. 10. *He that sitteth in Darkness, and seeth no light, should trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God,* this did much support and encourage



courage me to depend upon God, whereby I had abundance of consolation. Yet I was seldom free from many Temptations, Fears, and Doubts; and such sometimes as did much disquiet me, untill once that I had a Divine Dream, which hath been very sweet to my Soul ever since; for in my Dream I thought I was told, that God's love was free in Jesus Christ, and bestowed upon poor sinners through his Merits, and that he put none by, neither turned any away that came to him in and through his Dear Son, and that I need not fear but I was one of them that should be accepted and received to Mercy. This brought much Joy to my Heart, and the sense of it remains to this very day. Afterward I went to *New-England*, and had much comfort from them, and from their Ministers, and since my return, I have had great peace of Mind, and desire to live in Union with Christ, and Communion with his Servants, as long as I am upon Earth; and I have grounded hopes of living with him when I dye, and with all his Saints, to enjoy his Blissfull presence to Eternal Ages. R. W.

III. *Experiences of Maj. A. M.*

I was well Educated by my Parents, who were seasoned Puritans, till about sixteen years of Age, after which I was put an Apprentice to *London*, but ill company drew me away; and I took ill courses, till I was about 24 years Old; then I came into *Ireland* in the beginning of the Rebellion 1641. and Travelling toward the North, passed through great Dangers, and many Deaths, as I may say, for there my Father was killed, my Wife wounded, and I my self with much difficulty, escaped from the bloody Rebels; after this I was in the Fight at *Drogheda*, or *Tredah*, when it was taken, and being laid in the Field of Battel among the Slain, I was given over for one of the Dead, but

but it pleased God that I recovered, and then went into *England*; I had not been there long, but I began to look about me, and to have some convictions of mind, and thereupon I was diligent to follow the means, and hear the VVord of God Preached by good Men, being sensible of my sins, and former forgetfulness of God, or anything that was good; I heard one Mr. Owen, with whom I was much affected, and convinced of my misery in the want of Christ, and afterwards received great comfort; and assured hopes of Salvation from Mr. R. and now I do verily believe, I have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and find a wonderful change in my Soul, abhorring all ill company and courses, and desiring to walk in all well pleasing toward God; and tho I meet with many Temptations, yet I bless the Lord he carries me on in his good ways, so that I can now pray to him by the assistance of his Spirit, and have an earnest love to his Word and Ordinances; Blessed be God for his free grace in Christ Jesus, who before I had any knowledge of him, spoke to my Heart by the means of an honest Man about thirteen years ago. After which I followed all the means I could meet with, and was wont to hear Mr. Cradock, and Mr. Symson in *London*, the first of whom in a Sermon upon *Isaiah*, *Wee is me, I am an unclean Creature, &c.* spoke so home to my condition, that I imagined his Discourse was directed to me particularly; This so wrought upon my Conscience, that I was extremely afflicted for a time, and gave my self much to Prayer, and at length I became in love with Truth, and true Christians, and have found, and do yet find those things true in me, which were spoken by Mr. N. of that oneness of Love and unity of the Spirit, which ought to be among all Gods People;

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ple; I have seen my sad condition by Nature, and am sensible of the happy change that the grace of God hath made in me, and now Oh! how do I love the ways of God, and Holiness, and Duties, and means of Grace, and the things of God which before I slighted, disregarded, and loathed; and lastly, I now desire, and long after Jesus Christ, and care not how soon I be taken out of this sinful World, that I may live with him in Eternal Glory. *A. M.*

*IV. Experiences of F. B.*

**M**Y Experiences of the Mercy and Love of God, are more than I can express, the first main work upon my Spirit, was on a sudden, upon an Alarm given to our Troop, while I was a Souldier, which had such a convincing effect upon me, that I lay long under the Apprehension of Gods Wrath, and was much disquieted; so that though I Prayed, and Prayed, yet I could take no comfort, and had no confidence in the Mercy of God, but Confusion was before my Face. Afterward I came to Dublin, where I was impeached for breaking an Article of War, and was condemned to lose my Life for the same; whilst I was in Prison, I had dreadful apprehensions of Hell in my Soul, and could do nothing but weep, and mourn, and pray, counting my Life to be lost, and yet I was more troubled for the wrath of God, then the wrath of Man; But at length it pleased God to give me comfort, for one Night whilst I was bemoaning my self, and in much Despair, on a sudden the room was all in a flame, and I thought my self in the midst of Lightning, and being terrified, I imagined I saw these words written against the Wall, *Thy sins are Pardoned, and thy Life is hid with Christ in God.* This extraordinary Manifestation, much eased the Trouble and Sorrow wherein I was; but yet for want

want of Faith; this comfort did not long continue with me; for after that, I thought I saw the Lord with such a wrathful countenance, that I durst not look upon him; and the next news that I heard was, that I was ordered to be shot to Death; Oh! then I cannot express the terrors that I was in; my woful misery was such, that neither Prayers, reading of the Scriptures, nor the precious promises therein, could afford me any Relief, for I could not believe that I had any right to them, and therefore could not lay hold of them. In this dreadful Distress I lay, a condemned Man both in Soul and Body, lamenting my wretched condition, when opening the Bible in *Isa. 54. 13.* I saw it thus written. *Turn ye to the Lord God, for he is Gracious and Merciful, slow to Anger, and of great Tenderneſs, and Repenteth him of the Evil.* Hereupon I pondered a while, and said, and is he such a God? Well then he is my God; and with that I gave my self up into his Hands, resolving to rely upon him, let him do what he would with me; and on this Foundation I was Settled and satisfied. A while after, it pleased the Lord to deliver me out of the danger of Death, and to set me at liberty from Prison; but notwithstanding this great Mercy, yet I must confess that I afterward found such opposition in my Heart against God, as I could not believe had been in me; I was grievously wounded for it, and could have no quiet, but went to Mr. W. and acquainted him with it, who told me that I had fallen from my first Works, and that I must Repent. This rent my Heart, and I had no Rest; I returned from him and applyed to Prayer, keeping that course continually, till by degrees I was recovered out of that disconsolate condition, and I praise God I have since found his favour and kindness extended to-

ward

ward me, so that I am fully perswaded he loves me, and will pardon my sins in Jesus Christ, on whose Merits I relie, in whose Righteousness I rest, and by whose Grace I am now set free to serve him here, and doubt not but to Reign with him hereafter. *F.B.*

*V. Experiences of H. M.*

**M**Y Father was a Gentleman of a fair Estate, had many Children, eleven Sons of us he was High Sheriff, and when he dyed, all our Family were broken, dispersed, and in confusion. Two of us were brought up within five Miles of *Gloucester*, but I was placed an Apprentice in *London*, and by this means my sorrows and troubles began to be great, at first from the consideration of this suddain change, which continued a while, but about the 17th year of my Age, my former grief was turned into another kind of Trouble, namely, Sorrow for my sins; I was for three years together, wounded with the sense of my sins and corruptions, which were many, I followed Sermons, persuing the means, was constant in Duties and Doing, looking for Heaven that way. I was very precise in outward formalities, censuring all for Reprobates that wore their Hair long, and not short above their Ears, or that followed the common Modes and Fashions of those days. Thus I continued Distracted in my Thoughts, and wounded in my Conscience, weeping often and bitterly, and Praying earnestly; but yet had no comfort, till I heard that sweet Saint now, in Heaven *Dr. Sibbs*, by whose Means and Ministry, I was brought to Peace and Joy in my Spirit; his sweet Soul-melting Sermons won my Heart, and Refreshed me much, for by him I saw much of the goodness of God, and had good Hope and Confidence in Christ Jesus, and could overlook the World, undervalue all Earthly things, and

and was not afraid of Afflictions, and though I was sometimes under the Spirit of Bondage again unto fear, yet my Heart still held firm, and my desires were all Heaven-ward; I took delight to hear Funeral Sermons, but Dr. Sibbs chiefly, by whom I was effectually wrought upon, and satisfied with Comforts, which I hope will never leave me, till I come to Everlasting Rest. *H. M.*

VI. *Experiences of Mr. T. H. Minister of the Gospel.*

I was but young when I first came under Convictions of Soul; and my Heart being warmed by a zealous Ministry, which put me much upon Duty, I used to read the Scriptures every Night, and to Repeat Sermons often, and so I spent the first Scene of my Youth, till I was sent by my Friends to *London*, where I lived a year or two; during that time, as often as I saw any Minister I could not but weep, and always wisht that I might be one my self, to be able to Preach too; after this I was sent to one of the Universities in *England*, but being wild with youthful company, was removed to the Colledge of *Dublin*, where I continued till the horrid Popish Rebellion broke out, in 1641. At which time I left it, and went to *Liverpool* in *Lancashire*, where I Preached some years; yet all this while I was but formal, and as the young Man in the Gospel said, he had kept all these things from his Youth; so I was from from my youth Religious, well given, loving the means, and following them, hearing Sermons, and seeking to serve God. But alas! I was yet all this while in Darkness; and did not know it; but afterwards I saw that I was blind and carnal: For I began to be in great Doubts and Troubles, and very much clouded in my Spirit, and was exceedingly tyed and bound up for a time,

time, under the Sense of my formal Holiness and sins, but the Lord was pleased to give me light. Once as I was walking sadly alone upon the Mountains, it pleased the Lord so to influence me by his Spirit, which seemed to be immediately poured out upon me, that my Soul was satisfied in Jesus Christ, and my Heart was filled with Heavenly Joy and Peace, and with most Ravishing contemplations; which continued without a cloud for several weeks together, and gave me assured Hopes of the Love of God; and ever since I have lived in the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and though I have met with many storms and clouds, yet they have all passed away, and cannot hinder me from Salvation, so long as Christ who is my Lord and Saviour, is above them; and I doubt not but he will at last Translate me from his Kingdom of Grace here, to his Kingdom of Glory hereafter.

VII. *Experiences of Capt. J. S.*

**W**HEN I was carnal & ignorant, I did very much slight the Ministers of Christ, especially our long Preachers, and could not abide that any should make long Sermons; but at last I was taken by one Preached out of *Hebrews 8. 13.* *Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah.* This New Covenant made in Christ, was applied very home to my Soul, and touched me to the Heart, causing me to enquire into my condition; hearing that the danger of being out of this Covenant, was as great as it was of old, to have been out of Noahs Ark; and I began to converse with my own Heart, and to enquire whether I were under this New Covenant or no; but alas I could find no Satisfaction, and lay long under great Affliction and Trouble, so that I knew not

what to do, being under many Temptations; sometimes I would hear, and was affected with the Ordinances, and at other times not; and so I continued a while, until I was comforted by reading these and some other suitable Promises, Hosea 14. 4. *I will heal their Backslidings, and love them freely, for mine Anger is turned away from them,* and Heb. 8. 12. *For I will be Merciful to their Unrighteousness, and their Sins and Iniquities will I remember no more.* And Rom. 5. 6, 8. *In due time Christ dyed for the Ungodly, while we were yet sinners, &c.* But yet I questioned whether he dyed for me or no; and it was answered, yes for me, for I was one of the number of sinners, and ungodly that needed Christ; but being in fears, I went and told Mr. Bridges how I was, who indeed satisfied me very much for the time; Yet after this I fell into much Trouble, and had a Sentence of Death within me, and thought I was Damned, and utterly lost for all this, still wanting Faith, and resting and relying upon my own actings and graces, till the Lord brought these sayings of Paul to Corinth close home to my Heart, *Covet the best things, and I tell you yet a more excellent way.* And I thought there was yet a better way than I had met with, for which I was troubled a great while; But at length I had some sweet Discoveries of Jesus Christ, and then I perceived the most excellent way, which is nothing but Christ, and an interest in him; whereupon I grew to be full of courage and peace, loving Christ above all, and in all, who is now all in all to my Soul, and I question not but he will be my Portion and Inheritance to all Eternity. *T. H.*

## VIII. Experiences of J. C.

**U**Pon a Lords Day at Night, I being earnestly Praying to be confirmed in Faith, & in the right ways



ways of God; After Prayer I went to sleep, and about five in the Morning, I had the following Dream, and presently upon my waking, I made hast to write it down, lest I should forget any part thereof, it seeming very strange to me, and I believing there was something extraordinary therein. My Dream was to this purpose:

I thought I was in the Company of Mr. R. the Minister, Coll. H. and my Lord C. and that we were all going together upon a fine green way, in which we Travelled a long time; and then Mr. R. turns back to us and said; 'Brethren you may see what a great comfort it is to walk in the Paths of Righteousness; for though we have Travelled so long; yet we are not at all weary, And Brethren, be assured that I will lead you to a place of great Joy and Comfort before it be long, if you will but follow me; Then I Dreamt we went a little further; till we came to a very long and spacious place, wherein there was a great Gate, and there Mr. R. made a Prayer, and as soon as he had concluded, the Gate was opened, and being entred, we went into a great Garden, where was a large pair of Stairs, and going up we saw a great many dead Mens Bones, which appeared to Mr. R. in full and perfect shapes of Men as ever they were, as I conceive, for at those Bones he made a stand, and said unto us; 'Look Brethren, and take good notice of the Handy-work of our Great God; For here you may see that they are in as perfect shapes, as they were in the lower World. We then proceeded further, and Mr. R. made another stand, and said unto us; 'Brethren, now I shall see whether you are strong in Faith or no; So we came to a place where we must needs go over, which appeared to be like a deep Pit, and a small Pike seemed to be laid over,

He and Mr. R. said; ' Come Brethren, our Journey is in vain, unless we go over this Pike, for they that will see the Habitation of the Lord, must go through many Dangers, and I, by the Grace of God will be your Leader. He then went over with as much Safety and Ease, as if he had walked on the Earth; Next Coll. H. went over with much ease also, and after him my Lord G. It came next to my Turn, but seeing so dreadful a downfall, and the Pike to bend and shake so much, I was extremely afraid, and durst not set a foot upon it, whereupon Mr. R. cryed out to me, *no Friend, Friend, you have walkt in the Paths of Doughtiness!* He then made a Prayer to Almighty God, that he would permit me to go over, and afterward bowed three or four times, and cryed out with a loud Voice: ' Oh thou Great God, how much am I bound unto thee, for thy Loves and Manifestations towards me; So taking me by the Hand, he bid me come over and not fear, and then I walked over with as much Safety as the rest; we then went a little further, and came to a very fair Room, and I could not see any one in it, but I conceive that Mr. R. and the other two saw, and spake with God, for after they had done speaking, they gave many Bows and Thanks; And then Mr. R. said; ' Come we will sing praises unto the Lord, for all his Promises and great Gifts to us; Hereupon I Dreamt, we began to sing, and I heard a Multitude of Voices, with rare Musick; yet could see none but our selves. When Mr. R. had done giving God his Glory, in singing his Praises, he rose up and Saluted us, saying, ' Well Brethren, I have but a short time to stay here with you: and whilst I have been amongst you, I have endeavoured to bring you to the right way to Worship God, and

and for the time I continue with you, I shall by the help of God, make known unto you greater things then I have done yet, so I desire you to follow my Counsel, and it shall be for your own profit and advantage.

Then I waked, or else might have known more; This Dream had such an effect and influence upon me, that I could not rest till I had declared it; and now I find my Heart ever since taken off from Sin, and the Lusts of the World, and have experienced so great a change in being called home to God, as I am not able to express it in words; and am now desirous to please God, and to walk in his ways, having been long before wrought upon by the Word Preached, and by Prayer; and now have given my self up to God, in whose Mercy alone, through the Merits of Jesus Christ, I expect Joy and Peace here, and Eternal Happiness hereafter. *J. C.*

*IX. Experiences of Mr. J. B. Preacher of the Gospel.*

**AS** to my Life, and Experiences, I must declare That when I was but a little one, God began to work upon me; for going to School, I once happened to Swear an Oath, as I was playing with my Companions, which I had no sooner uttered, but I was instantly struck with horror for it, and the sense thereof was so terrible, that I doubted I should be presently thrown into Hell for it: In which Fear and great trouble, I left my School Fellows playing; the Sorrow and Misery I thought I was in, would not permit me to stay any longer; Away I went into the Church Porch not far off, and sitting down alone, for some time wept bitterly to my self; But at length, I know not how, I began to have some hopes of Pardon, and thereupon grew cheerful and fearless, till a while

after, I went to see some Malefactors Executed ; For after I came home, the sight of their Deaths run so much in my Mind, and appeared so continually before my Eyes, that my sins, and the horrors of Hell came fresh upon me again, so that I was exceedingly cast down, and cryed out : *Oh ! What shall I do ? How shall I be Saved ?* Which I had often in my mouth, and in the hearing of my Friends ; In this condition I could take no comfort from them, till the Lord himself brought me out of it, and inclined me to give up my self to Jesus Christ, by the Life of Faith which I now live ; Notwithstanding which, I was under several Temptations, and oftentimes they came very thick upon me ; but even then I resolved, that if I were thrown into Hell, yet I would still lay hold upon my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and would never let him go ; and upon his Merits and Satisfaction, I have been Established through his Grace ever since ; So that I take Christ for my King, Priest and Prophet, and do believe him to be a Propitiation for my sins, and my Portion and Inheritance both here and for ever. *J. B.*

*Experiences of VV. VV.*

I have much reason to acknowledge a great work of God upon my Heart, in delivering me wonderfully from several destroying sins, which once I thought slight, but were really so great, that I can scarce express them ; I was very Extravagant, and brought very low both in Body and Mind, and extremely sensible of Disobeying my Parents from what the Scripture says of Men in the latter times, that they shall be *Lovers of themselves, Heavily, Disobedient to their Parents, &c.* The Serious consideration hereof cast me down, afflicted my Conscience, and so troubled me, that I was altogether comfortless ; Thus I continued a long time, till

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It pleased God that once in a Sermon I heard Jesus Christ freely offered even to the worst of sinners, and then I began to look up a little with hopes of comfort, and applied these offers to my own Soul, being sensible that I had real need of them; and so at length I began to be satisfied with peace and rest, and followed the hearing of the Word, and rejoiced in it, and loved the company of good People. And yet for all this I was under much temptation, and too much inclined to drinking, till my Brother *Strang* reprov'd me, saying, Brother, I hear strange things of you, that you are given to drinking; This so smote me, together with the abuses I received from the prophane sort, who cry'd out after me, *O this is one of Fowler's followers!* that I was wounded in my spirit a long time, to think that I should bring such a scandal upon the Gospel; For two months I was wofully tormented in my mind, till the Lord recovered me, and gave me resolution and power against this and all other sins, which hath continued with me ever since, and for which I acknowledge his great love and mercy to me, and do live upon Christ the true *Messiah*, whom I believe to have died for my sins, and that he will save my Soul.

*X. Experiences of M. K.*

When I take a view of my Life upon the Stage of this World, I may very well compare it to a Trage-Comedy, a Labyrinth from one sin to another, from one affliction to another. I was indeed the Daughter of very good and honest Parents, who diligently brought up their Children in the fear of God. My Mother, who in her days was noted for a godly, virtuous and religious Gentlewoman; she, I say, from amongst twelve Children, chose me to set her love and affection upon, the

told me, it was because she saw something a more tractableness and diligence to please her than in the rest, which when I perceived, as then not being seven years old, I laid my self forth the more to give her content, who took great delight to instruct me, to hear me read, and ask her questions. She allotted me a portion of Scripture every day, as likewise a part of *Erasmus Rotterdamus* upon the four Evangelists, wherein we both took great delight.

About that time I had serious thoughts concerning God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who putting this part of Scripture into my mind, *He that is ashamed of me before men, of him will I be ashamed before my Father which is in Heaven; and who denieth me before men, him will I deny before the Angels which are in Heaven*; I then began to examine my self on this manner, 'What wouldst thou do, if thou wert tempted, amongst diversities of Opinions, to be ashamed of this Profession wherein thy Parents nurtured thee? What wouldst thou do, if thou shouldst be tempted to deny Christ, and be called to suffer for his sake, as some of thy kindred were in *Queen Maries* time? wouldst thou not deny thy Master? wouldst thou not run away from thy colours? I resolved, that I would not: And if the Lord would be pleased to try me, he should see how valiantly I would fight under his Banner, and what a faithful Soldier I would be; to this I did implore his help continually; whatsoever I was about, still my heart was praying, and I desired that God would be pleased to awake me in the night, that I might rise out of my Bed to prayer, which many times I did.

After this manner I spent my days, until I was twelve years old, at which time it pleased God to take

take my Mother from me, which was some sorrow to me, but being suddenly made my Father's house-keeper, so as it were a Mother to ten Children, a Mistress over six Servants, none to do any thing without my command or consent, being as it were my Father's right hand, from whom I had this Authority; it did not only stop my sorrow, but caused an exceeding joyful pride, or proud joy to seize upon my heart, seeing my self as it were advanced, being respected amongst the chiefest of the Parish, who were my Mother's companions, I representing her person when I was amongst them; then began the cares of the World, and the deceivableness of vanities to seize upon my heart, and made me forget my former order, promises, and intention; and thus I spent almost seven years, embred about many things, but quite neglecting that one thing which is needful.

About this time, it pleased God to take my Father from me, upon a sudden. I asked my heavenly Father what was the cause of my Father's death? He made answer thus, Because thou hast sinned against God; thou hast not only omitted much good, but thou hast committed much evil, thou hast spent thy time idly, and loosely, and for thy sake all thy Brothers and Sisters are now made Fatherless and Motherless. These considerations made such a deep impression upon my spirit, that I refused all comfort for half a year, crying out continually, *My sins, my sins, woe it me, my sins!* being demanded by divers godly friends, and reverend Divines, what those sins were which so much troubled me? I told them, *sins of omission, sins of omission*; they would persuade me that I was young, and that I had not years enough over my head to be guilty of so many sins by omission, I needed so much sorrow, I told them that I was

old enough to offend God, and to provoke him to anger; indeed, I could not give so ready account of my sins, of evil committed, and of good omitted; but though they never took notice of my sins, yet my heart was witness against me: Thus I wearied all my Friends with my excessive sorrow, who knew not what to do for me more than they had done. With one consent they sent me up to *London*, perswading me that the Word of God was more plentifully Preached there, which made me willing to come. But missing of my Brother, to whom I was sent, to be provided for, and resolving to wait upon some Gentlewoman until I could with conveniency return down again, God by his providence brought me to the Wife of Dr. *Page*, Minister of *Deerford*, from whom I received great comfort, but in a short time God took him from us all, whose death was greatly lamented. I found much favour and love from all that knew me, and most especially from Mrs. *Page*, who for three years and an half, would not suffer me to be away from her one day.

At the end of which time I was married to her eldest Son then living; we had not been long married, and my Husband received his Portion, but we took a house in *Westminster*, intending to take some honest course for a livelihood, but there, God knows, we fell acquainted with some company which did not only cause much time to be spent in idleness, but almost all our means. One man especially who gave his mind to drinking, and other vices more than any good, he, I say, was never well contented without my Husband's company. Seeing imminent danger to hang over our heads by reason of this course of life, I greatly desired my Husband to refrain that man's company, or at least not to suffer him to come so often home:

to



to our house; This I begged upon my knees with tears, but could not prevail; then did the Devil set his foot into my heart, and perswade me that by the committing of one sin, I should prevent many, and so stirred me up to murder him, to which suggestion I cowardly yielded, and sought all opportunities to perform this wicked act. Here I denied my Master Christ. In the highest of this hatred, in my sleep, I thought I was in a very large Chamber, sitting behind a Table covered with a green Carpet, upon which lay all manner of Instruments which proclaim death; suddenly the man came into the Chamber, whom, so soon as I espied to be alone, catching up a weapon in my hand, I resolved there to commit the horrid act of murder upon his body; but God, who watcheth over his, whether they sleep or wake, and worketh by means, and without means, which way he pleaseth, at that time put an end to all my revengeful thoughts, and caused me to hear a voice in my Ear, saying, *Vengeance is mine*; to which voice I answered aloud, *And thou wilt repay, O Lord*; Then waking, hearing my self speak, I was in very good charity with him, and left my wrong to God, but reflecting upon mine own heart, there I found not only these, but a whole nest of most Diabolical and wicked intentions, which my God was pleased by his preventing graces to smother in their birth, for I no sooner had concluded, that I would fulfil mine own hearts lust, although I suffered all the punishments due for such and such like sins; wherein I ran away from my Captain, yet for all this he had a favour towards me, and sent an Herald after me to bring me back again.

But then began a fresh Battle for my God coming as it were, to see what use I had made of the Talent that he had given me, he found it, not only wrapt

up in a napkin, but exceedingly abused; and searching my heart, what found he there, but a sink of sin, a Cage of unclean Birds, and Den of Thieves, a place for Dragons, for the Scritchowl, and for the Satyre? these had taken full possession, there was no room for my God, they kept him out, and what did they there, but made it like a troubled Sea? First, telling me my sins were greater than could be forgiven. Dost thou not know, (said they) that thy thought-sins are sufficient to damn thee, although thou hast never committed any actually? doth not the Scripture say plainly, if a Man lust after a Woman he hath committed Adultery? which commandment being broken, brings death. I then took a view of all the ten Commandments written in the Moral Law, to see which of them I had broken, and which I had kept, I found them all broken, and at the end of every one was written Death. And not only those, but those sweet commands of my Saviour Jesus Christ, wherein he bids us watch, and pray for your enemies, feed the hungry, cloath the naked, love one another, all which I had likewise broken, which made me to see nothing to remain for me but death and damnation. I argued then with my self on this wise, I have read, and I have heard, that Almighty God, which by his power made Heaven and Earth, and all therein, had sent his Son to dye for sinners, and that there was hopes through his death that I should get pardon; I had no sooner cast mine eye upon my God and Saviour, but I was dashed from all: Mine enemy Satan possessing my thoughts, suggested thus unto me.

Fond Fool (quoth he) why dost thou thus trouble thy self? take thy pleasure, do what thou likest, thou shalt never be called to an account,

count for any thing: for as the wise man dyeth, so dyeth the fool, and both rest in the grave together; there is no God to save thee or to punish thee, all things were made by nature, and when thou dyest, there is an end of all thy good and bad deeds; thou talkest of the Scripture, and of a God, and of a Jesus which thou hast heard of there; see thy simplicity now, how canst thou prove the Scriptures to be true? alas they were made by mens inventions, there is no hold for thee to take there.

Thus being unquiet, I spent my days and nights in tears and sighs, and groans, sometimes thinking with my self *If I shall be saved, why am I thus?* Then again, concluding that there was no Heaven, no God, no Jesus, no good Angels, only an Hell there was, and Devils to carry me thither, who waited in every corner, and behind every door to snatch me away: And I saw there was no remedy, but the more I strove, the faster I stuck, I fainted, and laid down mine arms, and cowardly yielded to the enemy, arguing with my self, *if I am a firebrand of Hell, a child of perdition, a limb of Satan, and my portion is to be with the Devil and his Angels: Why live I longer upon the Earth? why go I not to mine own place?* Thus content to perish, I wandred about the space of half a year; no Manner Woman was privy to, nor knew the least of all my thoughts; at length concluding that the night ensuing, would be my last night that I should stay here on Earth, as one desiring to be at home, I carelessly left my Family and went to bed, as it were, *inviting the Devils to come and take their due*; but mark I pray you, the goodness of our God, who was with me all this while, and I was not aware of it, for even that same night, The little dog leaping upon the bed, I thought

thought it was the Devil who was come to fetch me away; I screamed forth aloud; but when I perceived it was the dog, and not the Devil; I began to think, *That surely there was a God that had preserved me all this while.*

In a most grievous agony I spent that night weeping, and although it was Winter, yet I sweat that the water ran from off every part of my Body. Being in this sad condition, I thought it was not right, but surely some means might be used to get out of it. And rising the more early in the morning, went up into the highest room that was in the House, and looked forth at the window to see if I could see God; there I beheld the Trees to grow, the Birds to flye, the Heavens how they hanged, and all things that were before me, then I thought they could not make themselves, no more than I could make my self, and that we must needs have a Maker, and this Maker must be strong and powerful; Then I fell down upon my knees, crying out in this manner, 'O God, if there be a God, shew thy self to me a poor miserable wretch, that I am at the point to perish; Then I thought I saw the Lord, but with a frowning countenance he looked upon me, as if he had said, 'Thou hast displeased me, and I will not hear thee, and turning his back went from me, which sight was as a dart thrust through my Soul; for the space of half an hour, divers thoughts entred into my Heart, but before I rose from off my knees, I resolved to become an earnest suter to him, and not to do any thing more that should displease him, hoping that he would be intreated for that which was past.

But now, I beseech you godly Christians, to take notice of the wonderfull workings of our good God, whose judgements are unsearchable,  
and

and his ways past finding out. He had called many times at the door of my heart, and had but small and slight entertainment, but now he came violently and powerfully to take possession of his own, and set me about his work in my self: Then I began to think what I should do, and whether I should go to pacifie the wrath of this terrible and dreadfull God, by whose providence I was brought to a Church in *Westminster*, where Mr. *Dod*, a very godly and reverend Divine, was preaching a Funeral Sermon, I went in, hoping to hear some comfort, giving attentive heed, his Text was, *With my dead body they shall arise*; see here, my God did not only make a scourge of small cords, and whipped out the buyers and sellers, but he did over-turn, and overturn, and overturn; for this Minister did not only preach to the people, but shewed me, as it were in a looking-glass, mine own condition, and told me that by the gates of Hell many times God was pleased to bring his Servants to Heaven; being hungry and thirsty, I was glad of a little food; and presently catcht hold of that word; Is it so thought I, then there is comfort for me, I will about my work, if it please God to assist me: In his Sermon he asked divers questions, to which my heart made answer, so that I came home joyfull, longing to hear more of his Doctrine, which fell out as if it had been on purpose for my sake, so that for a month, or five weeks, I heard two, three, four, or five Sermons, from him constantly every week, wherein he bid me try and prove whether I had Faith or no, whether I did hate my sins or no, and what have been the signs and fruits thereof: He likewise bid me search the Scriptures, for they are true, and compare my condition with the children of God there; But after he was sensible of my condition, which

I made known to him privately, he was very laborious to bring my Soul out of the jaws of Death, and to raise it up to Jesus Christ, for which pains, I hope my God will reward him to his everlasting comfort.

But one thing I had almost forgot. When I was in the depth of my spiritual dejection, I was utterly denied all outward comforts, my God hiding his face I was troubled, the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, seemed in their courses to fight against me, my neighbours fell out with me, and mocked me, my kindred deserted me, my Captain Christ offended, made me run the gauntlet, and every Souldier had a lash at me, whatsoever happened unto me, brought sorrow to my heart.

But when I was perswaded that the Scriptures were true, I set my self to search them, to see what comfort I could find there; beginning at the Alpha of *Genesis*, I found, In the beginning God created the Heaven, and the Earth, and all therein; Well then, though I, there is a God; but viewing a little further, I found this God offended, and Man in a lost condition, but presently a remedy promised; going on, I found the Paschal Lamb, the brazen Serpent, the bunch of Grapes, the scape Goat, and divers other things to be types of that promised Seed; I likewise took a view of the afflictions of *Joseph*, *David*, and *Job*, that did much ease my grief. Coming to that place where my God spake by his Prophet, 'Come, let us reason together, though your sins were as scarlet, I will make them as white as snow, though they were like crimson, they shall be like wool; And though you had lain among the pots, yet shall ye be like doves wings, covered over with silver; Then I thought, will the Lord reason with sinners? will he vouchsafe a Parley? O that I were able

able to answer him one of a thousand! O that these promises belonged unto me! O that this God were reconciled unto me! How happy should I be; how happy is that man whose Transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered? O, how blessed is that man unto whom the Lord imputeth no sin! I found the same Prophet *Isaiah* prophesie of my Saviours birth in his 9th Chapter, and in his 53, he lively sets forth his Passion, and in the 55, the Lord inviting me with a Proclamation; *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come*; then I answered, Lord, I would fain come, but how shall I come? I have nothing to bring to pacifie thine anger, O that I could see thee smile upon me, as once I saw thee frown, how happy should I be: then I called to mind that I had heard, and read, that *Jesus Christ shed his blood for sinners, and that whosoever believeth in him should be saved*; and I was something encouraged to petition in his Name on this manner.

Heal me O Lord, and I shall be healed; turn me, and I shall be turned; convert me, and I shall be converted. O save me, my God, and I shall be saved; take away this stony heart of mine, and give me an heart of flesh, renew a right Spirit within me, restore me to those joys that I was wont to find in thee, for thy loving kindness is better than thousands of Rivers of Oyl; O cast me not away whom thou hast had so much patience withal; O cast me not away whom thou hast bought with so dear a price; O forsake me not in this my great necessity, O look upon that ever-streaming fountain of thy Sons blood, which is poured forth for all them that believe; Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief; O pardon, pardon, I beseech thee, forgive me all my sins, my Sermon-sins, my Sabbath-sins,

' sins, my every-days sins, my other peoples sins,  
 ' my sins of omission, my sins of commission, my  
 ' sins of ignorance, my sins of knowledge, my sins  
 ' of presumption, my sins of willfulness; O Lord,  
 ' forgive me my known and secret sins, O pardon  
 ' the sins that I have committed this day, O speak  
 ' the word only, and thy Servant shall be healed,  
 Amen.

Thus when the Lord had opened my mouth to  
 speak unto him, I gathered a great deal of strength;  
 and had much hope that he would be intreated;  
 but not setting so great an esteem on my Saviour  
 Jesus Christ as I ought, I thought I *must bring someth-  
 ing with me to pacifie my God; I thought I must  
 make my self all fair, and beautiful, before my  
 God would love me, but how to do this I knew  
 not; for the space of eleven years I sought all op-  
 portunities to please him, yet when I examined  
 my ways, works, and actions, I found they were  
 so far from pleasing him, that they were rather  
 motives to stir him up to anger, if he should be  
 severe to mark what I did amiss; many times I  
 thought upon the sad condition that I had been in,  
 and how the Lord had restored me. then my heart  
 was elevated and over-joyed; I found a great deal  
 of love in my self towards God, but was not sure  
 of Gods love to me, which I esteemed above all  
 the World; the honour of God was so dear unto  
 me, that I could sometimes say unto him, ' Lord  
 ' if there be no way to bring honour to thy  
 ' Name, but by my confusion, then let me be  
 ' confounded; but sure Lord, thou maist gain  
 ' more glory in saving me, than in damning me,  
 ' the dead cannot bring honour to thy Name,  
 ' for who shall give thee thanks in the pit? the  
 ' living, the living, they shall praise thee, as I  
 hope to do hereafter.*

Many



Many times I prayed, and had many petitions granted me presently, and at other times I praye<sup>d</sup>, and was denyed what I begged, but had what I desired in a better way; in all Dispensations I found my God with me, either with his preventing, assisting, or supporting graces; I received innumerable favours from him, yet could I not be perswaded that they came from his love, but that rather they were to augment my score; I was still labouring and inquiring how I might come to be assured of Gods love, which he was pleased at length to shew me in some measure, on this manner; In the first of *John* I hear my Saviour Jesus Christ telling me, ' that I cannot come to him except ' God our Father draw me, and if I come to him, ' him, he will in no wise cast me out, but will ' raise me up at the last day; I am perswaded, that it was my God alone that did draw me to my Saviour Jesus Christ, that will receive me, and will raise me up at the last Day. In *John* 17. I hear him praying to his Father for me, whose request I am confident shall not be denyed.

Nay further, by faith I see my Saviour Jesus Christ suffering for me, nailed upon the Cross for me, wounded, buffeted, stript, and spit upon for me; dead, buried, rose again, ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of his Father, and my God, making intercession for me; which gives me assurance of my Gods everlasting and unchangeable love, in, and through my Saviour Jesus Christ, towards me, and that not for any thing that was in me, but for his sake, he said unto me, *when I was in my blood, live*; and I know I do believe and am regenerated by the Holy Ghost.

1. Because I find such an alteration in my self, that whereas before I could not believe there was a  
God

God, now I am sure there is a Great and an Almighty God, and he is my loving Father. 2. Before I durst not lift up mine eyes to Heaven, now I can with boldness cry, Abba, dear Father. 3. Before I did not regard the people of God, now all my delight is with the Saints that are upon the Earth. 4. I love to hear my God well spoken of, it grieves me to hear, or see him dishonoured. 5. I long to see my Saviour, and to kiss those wounds from which issued streams of blood, which pacified Gods anger towards me. 6. I rejoyce when I think of death, knowing that it is swallowed up in victory. 7. I often hear this voice in mine ears, *Arise ye dead, and come to judgment*; I rejoyce to hear this saying, *He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry*. 8. I desire sanctity of Life, and help from my Father to discharge my duty in that Calling wherein God hath placed me. 9. I long to hear him speak, who saith in the Omega of the Revelation, *Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me; even so come Lord Jesus, come quickly*, Amen, Amen. *M. R.*

#### XI. *Experiences of E. R.*

**I** was born and bred up of godly Parents; yet Satan so far tempted me to commit that detestable sin of telling a Lye, about eleven years of age, against a Sister of mine, who was shrewdly and severely corrected by my Parents for that fault, tho' none of hers, but mine, and I had not grace at that time to lay it to heart; but three months after I had a fit of Sicknes, and a grievous touch in my Conscience for that sin committed against God, and my Sister, that I saw nothing but desperation, and feared that the horrors of Hell-fire would seize on my Soul and Body for this sin, and Satan told me, that there was no Salvation for me, for God knew me not, neither would he own me, but

but if I would either hang my self, or cut my throat, or take the bedstail to thrust down my throat, then I should never be tormented more, but look how an Ox dyed, so should I. Then I cryed out to my Parents, and said, that I was damned, and that there was no Salvation for me; but that I must go to Hell; my Parents watched me, and searched narrowly to see what instruments I had prepared; Then the Devil tempted me to rend the pillow, and pick out some of the feathers to swallow them down, which I did, and it had like to have cost me my life, for I was very nigh death by this means.

My Parents sent for a Doctor to administer some things to me, which he did, and when I was a little recovered, they sent for Mr. *Knewstubs* Minister in *Edmundsbury*, and Mr. *Rogers* Minister of *Deudham*, who took a great deal of pains with me, and asked me whom I did believe in; I told them that I did believe in God that he would damn me; they asked me, if God would damn me because I did believe in him; I answered no, but it was for that sin committed against God, and my innocent sister; they asked me, whether I was not sorry for that act, I told them yes, I had cause enough to be sorry, for I must be damned for that sin; then they asked me if I was sorry with all my heart for my offences, I told them I had great reason to be sorry, for by this I had lost the love of God, and my interest in Jesus Christ; they replied, that Christ had left sweet comforts for penitent sinners, and they were to administer it unto them: But I replied, it was for such a sinner as I was; for there could be no Salvation for me: They told me Christ dyed for sinners, and such sinners as I was, for they said I was a penitent sinner; but I replied, Christ never dyed for such a one as I was, neither could his mercy

mercy save me; Then they bid me have a care how I did presumptuously go about to judge my own soul, and that I was not fit to judge my self in the condition I was under, for it was a greater sin in so doing, than to comit that sin of lying against God, for God was a God of mercy, but I had no mercy, thus rashly to judge my own soul; I replied, that they were as bad as I, for they came to help to carry my soul into Hell headlong; they told me no, but they would ingage their souls for my soul, that I should find comfort from them in Christ Jesus; with that I cryed out, O happy day would that be that I might find comfort before my departure; they told me that Christ was a Christ of tenderneſs, that I was a beloved Christian, and Christ was preparing comfort for me, and it was Christ that had opened my eyes to see my sin, and he would also open my heart to loath sin, and he would pardon my sin; yet I told them no, that he would never open my heart but with terror, for I was born to be damned, and must be damned; and that Christ never dyed for such a sinner as I was; this I spoke with great sighing; and they asked me what made me think so? I told them that I saw nothing but Death, and Hell, and confusion of body and soul; they asked me why I sighed, and wept, so sore? I told them because now I was going into Hell, for the Devil with his chains was ready to throw me into the utter pit of darkness; they said, Wherefore? I told them for offending the Lord my Creator, & did wish my self to be in Hell, that I might be out of misery, and might no longer feel the vengeance of God; with that they went to prayers, each of them an hour, and when the last Minister prayed, I cryed out, 'O Lord my God, my King, and Saviour, have mercy upon me a poor distressed sinner, Then Master Rogers came to me, and took me by the

the hand, and said, That he was glad to hear me call upon the Lord, yet *I* said, *I* should be damned, for *I* was none of his, and that the Lord was none of my God.

The next morning, I had some comfort but that left me again, and I was under the same condition of ebblings and flowings for sixteen weeks together, before I had any firm hopes of my Salvation; and having taken no rest a long time, I fell into a slumber; and in my sleep I imagined there did appear unto me a little child in white, with an apple in one hand, and a white wand in the other, and he carried me til I came into a place where I did see much terrour of fire, and shreeking, and a great deep ditch where was nothing to hold by, yet I must go over that burning lake; and he took the white wand and laid it over the ditch, and had me tread upon it, and fear not, but I refused, then he came and took me by the hand and trundled his apple on the wand, which bowled over verry level, and with that I said, It is the Lord, therefore I will venture, and did venture over with this child in my hand; and when I came to shore I cryed out with fear, my Lord, my God and my Saviour, am I in Hell, or am I redeemed out of Hell? with that I awaked, being in a great passion and fear, and there being my friends about me, they told me, I was redeemed out of Hell; I asked, How could they tell? had they been there? for I told them that I had been newly there; then I cryed out, Oh! where is that sweet Babe that was with me? they asked me what Babe, and what was the shape of it, I declared unto them as before, and they told me, That it was Jesus Christ that had appeared in the shape of a Child, and that he had overcome Death, and Hell, for me; then I cryed out, and said, blessed be Jesus Christ for

for evermore, and did intreat those people that were there with my Father, that they would go to prayers for me, that those comfortable revelations which I had seen, and my Faith in Christ, might never depart from me ; yet for three years after I had many ebbings and flowings, and much fear possessed me, so that Satan would tell me I was more afraid of Hell, than of offending God ; but I boldly sat up in my bed, and told Satan, He was a Lye, and that I would rather be damned than deny Jesus Christ, and so Christ did appear very comfortably to me, and hath, and doth deliver me out of many troubles very often, and how to speak of them I know no end ; yet Satan like a cunning Sophister hath been tampering with me to despair of Christ, but it pleased the Lord to bring many promises into my mind, and the example also of *Mary Magdalen*, and of the woman of *Canaan* ; believing, that as Jesus Christ was gracious to them, so he would also be to me ; and Christ hath often times revealed unto me, that his grace was sufficient for me, as he said unto *Paul* ; I can speak but little of Jesus Christ, but yet I am fully perswaded in my Soul, that I should think my self very happy, even to give my life for the glory and honour of his name, if the Lord would count me but worthy of such a favour, and I would not for all the Kingdoms in the world, and the pomp thereof, be in such a condition again ; and now my soul doth desire to give up it self unto God, and to walk in the strictest course that his Word doth prescribe. E. R.

#### XII. Experiences of T. M.

**A**Bout the fourteenth year of my age I was put out to be an Apprentice, but was placed with a Master in whom I saw little of God, his ways were contrary to the ways of God, which was a great trouble

trouble to my Spirit; and the more because some rude people Drink, Swear, and be very deboysh with him. Three or four years after, there grew great disputes amongst some persons about Episcopacy, Presbytery, Independency, and the like, which made me question with my own thoughts, which was the true way to worship God. I applied my self to Mr. T. the Minister, and others, yet was not satisfied, but after great perplexity of spirit, I meditated with my self, and wondred what would be the end of my troubles, for they had been many, especially temptations to despair of salvation.

But afterwards being returned back from my Master to my Fathers house, lying down once upon a bench I fell asleep, and dreamed that I was in a green Meddow, where I saw various forms of Creatures, some furious, others very pleasing, yet all of them seemed monstrous, and changed their shapes often. And beholding my self alone in the midst of them, I was grievously troubled, and then there seemed to appear a great red Dragon; before it came at me I thought a little Child was put in my arms, which was so beautiful and comely that I admired it, and was so taken with beholding it, that it put the fear of the Dragon for the present out of mind; But the Dragon afterwards drew near, and sorely affrighted me; but both my self and the child were taken away, and carried up an hill, and the Dragon pursued us; and being often ready to fall in running up the hill, I feared that the Dragon would catch me, but my strength being come to me I got up to the top of the hill, and the Dragon made up after me. When I was got up to the top there appeared a brightness from Heaven, which gushed forth like a flash of Lightning, and split the Dragon in pieces, at which I

D

rejoyced

rejoyced exceedingly. Then the Child was put into my Arms again, and I asked it what was its name, it said, *Emanuel*; I asked who was its Father, it said, *I am*, I asked, who was its Mother, it said, *Eternity*, I asked, from whence he came, he said, *from my Father out of Heaven*; I asked to whom he came, and what was his errand here, he said, *to save that which was lost, and return again*; I asked him, if he would dwell with me while he stayed, he said, *he could not be detained according to that frame and figure he was in, but after death he would dwell with me in another frame*; the thought of death grieved me, but the child bid me not to weep at it, *for in this World, that which is beauty must be destroyed, and that which is contemptible must be exalted*. I then saw my self very contemptible, and poor, and troubled, and in these thoughts the child was taken away from me.

Then my Father coming into the room made a noise, whereat I awaked, much distracted, and troubled in my thoughts, and so perplexed that I knew not what to do, and the more, by seeking to understand what I had seen, because I knew not how to be satisfied, in some doubts that lay very sad and heavy upon my Soul. But I have since found much comfort out of Gods word, where Christ saith, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest*. And the Lord saith, *I have called thee by name*. And again, he saith in another place, *I will bear in thee a poor and afflicted people, and they shall serve me*. And in *Esay* he saith, *I will gather my Lambs with my Arms, and gently lead those that are with young*. and then he hath promised, *That he will never lay more upon his people, then he will enable them to bear*. And I have these effects of my faith; 1. My heart is led out to love God, who is eternal, and invisible, and incompre-



incomprehensible, I love him in all his dispensations towards me, and in the meanest Creature, though never so despised; I desire to own God where ever I see him. 2. I find my heart very full in duty, yet I have been sometimes troubled by some cholerick distempers that have transported me in some disputes which I am very sorry for, and resolve to leave. 3. I love the Lord, who hath heard my Prayer, and now at last satisfied me in every scruple of my conscience. 4. My desire is, to walk according to the rules of the Gospel, all the days of my life. *T. M.*

*XIII. Experiences of J. H.*

**M**Any years ago I had some yernings after the truths of Jesus Christ, and being in the Country, and hearing Mr. *Young* a Minister in *Leicestershire* preach twice a day, the Word wrought soon my heart, that I took great delight to hear him; but being jeered by the people for a Puritan, I did leave off hearing for a time. And being in the Town near Mr. *Young*, sometimes as I went abroad I met him, and Mr. *Young* would ask me whether I did know Jesus Christ or not, and what I did think him to be, I told him that I had read in the Scriptures, and they held him out to be the Son of God, and that he came to seek and to save that which was lost: Then said Mr. *Young* unto me, why do you draw back in not coming to hear the Word; I told him, it was because of the deridings of the people; I but said Mr. *Young*, you must persevere, and hold on in a continuance; opening some Scriptures, as that of the *Hebrews*, that being once enlightened and having tasted the good word, and of the powers of the world to come, if that Soul should fall away, then there would be nothing but a fearful looking for the fiery indignation of God. This did much trouble me, so that I was very fearful to

be damned. Then Mr. Young did open that Scripture in 1 Thess. 1. 4. 5. *You say that you know Jesus Christ to be your Saviour, therefore take heed, for Jesus shall appear in flaming fire, against all those that know him not, nor obey not his Gospel;* This put me in great fear and horror, worse than before. Then I did intreat Mr. Young to tell me, what the Gospel was, and he bid me read in the first of *Matth.* and there it was this, that *The Gospel was the glad tidings to the shepherds, that it was the good will of God to send Jesus Christ to save sinners, whereof I did confess with the Apostle Paul, that I was chief.* Mr. Young at parting gave me these Instructions, That I should be very careful what company I did go into, and that I should always remember my Creator in the days of my youth, and this was very fresh in my memory, and did strengthen me very much against the temptations of Satan, and kept me from frequenting those Companions that I did formerly use; and if at any time, I met them and heard their idle words, then this Scripture did often come into my mind, *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth,* and did very much cheer my spirits; and carry me along for many years, untill it pleased God to bring me to London, and coming to Black Fryers under the Ministry of Dr. Gouge, I was very much edified for two years together, but coming to live at Westminster, I did profit but little again, untill it pleased God to send Mr. Marshal, and hearing of him speaking out of *Jeremiah 14.* of the famine being in the outward man, but there was the famine of the Word of God at Westminster, it made me very attentive to his Doctrine, he complaining what a barbarous place Westminster had been, but now he did hope that the Word of God would take effect in the hearts of some of his Hearers, and truly so

it did on my heart, for I was a constant hearer of him, and then going to a friends family, I heard them repeat the Notes that they had taken from Master *Marshall*, and since I continued with that Company of Godly people; and now it is the desire of my Soul to have fellowship with the Father and the Son, that my Soul may thrive in grace, and in the knowledge and great love of that God, that so loved the World, that he gave his Son to dye to save such as I am, and that whosoever comes to him should not perish but have eternal life; with whom I beseech the Lord I may walk in a more close way to the end of my life, than ever I have yet done. *J. H.*

XIV. *Experiences of T. P.*

I Have had thoughts concerning my Spiritual condition, and made search into my Soul touching my estate in relation to GOD; and what testimony I can find of my Interest in and conversion to God. And I have found this to be the way of Gods working to bring me to himself, through his great mercy in the Lord Jesus. It hath pleased God ever since I was born, to place me under the means of the Gospel, the neglect whereof hath been a great trouble and grief unto my Soul; this with many sins more, lay heavy upon my Conscience, especially some offence and wrong offered against the People of God, insomuch that the terrors of Hell laid hold upon me, and I began with *Cain* to cry out, that my burthen was more than I was able to bear: I was a damned creature, I was out of the presence and favour of God, and never like to see his face with comfort, ready with *Judas* to destroy my self. I continued in this condition many years. But God of his exceeding mercy kept me from that great sin, and at last I received some comfort, in that the Lord proclaimeth himself to be the Lord

God, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, in forgiving sins; and that he desired not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should live. And again he saith, If our sins were as Scarlet, he will make them as white as Snow or VVool; Again, I am the Lord, and change not, therefore ye Sons of Jacob are not consumed. These with many other promises of Free Grace and Mercy yielded some comfort to my Soul, yet for a long time I was troubled; if I prayed, I feared my prayers were an abomination unto the Lord; at last knowing the Lord heard the *Ninivites*, that were Heathens, I thought he was as able to save my Soul. And it hath been my care to wait upon God in the means, knowing that *Faith cometh by hearing the word*, and upon all occasions to search my own heart, what part of the word belonged unto me, and what did not; I received some comfort from these promises, *I will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax; Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest; and, He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast off.* These gracious promises, cause me to desire to draw near to God in union, and in communion, with whom I hope for fellowship to all eternity. T. P.

XV. *Experiences of M. W.*

**W**Hen I lived in Ireland, and was in fullness of outward enjoyments, I had my thoughts much taken up about the things of the World, but little seriously touching the Salvation of my Soul; but some years since, being at Liverpool in Lancashire, I heard a Sermon preached by Mr. Tompson; his Text was, *Redem the time because the days are evil*: Many things he spake so home to my Soul, that I was very much troubled I had spent so many days in evil: That I had been covetous, and proud, and impatient in the former days of my life. Yet it pleased the Lord, I had

an Husband that was an honest Man, and one that feared God, who had often given me good counsel, and perswaded me to make some promises of amendment; But I had Children, and Servants, and Cattel, and lived plentifully in *Ireland*, from whence I had lately come with my Husband and Family; and indeed there had been no real conversion, though I had often thoughts towards God, and especially I was given much to impatiency, for which my Husband had often reprov'd me: But still I went on in my sin, being not sensible of my sad condition therein, until I came into *England*: After which this Sermon of Mr. T. did much humble me, and wrought upon my heart a very great sense of my sins. And I was afraid that I had committed the sin of Blasphemy against God, as *Yah* said, his children perhaps had done some way or other, because I had sometimes cursed some body, or something that had angered me, and in passion rapt out sometimes at Oath; many nights I watered my bed with my tears about it, and went to Mr. West a Minister near *Liverpool*, and other godly people who used such means, as God led them forth to, for my comfort; but I was still afflicted in my Soul, about the space of three weeks, and then I found much comfort being perswaded by good counsel to trust in God, which I did, and was heartily sorry for my sins.

And then my Husband was troubled in mind himself, and the Lord made me an instrument to comfort him, as well as I could. But about five months after, he had abundance of joy and comfort, and expected death, saying, that he was perswaded he should be killed, and so (presently after he was settled in his mind) it fell sadly out. For the Enemy took *Liverpool*, and killed my Husband, and a child, both before my face, and stript, and wounded

aled me, and a child of five years old; and it was thought I could not live. And this was a strong trial; and I was much tempted, my senses me thought were going from me, and my heart I thought would have rent in pieces, yet I prayed, and the Lord heard me, I thought it was too much for me to bear: But I remembered my Saviours words, *He that will not forsake Father, or Mother, or Sister, or Brother, or Husband, or Child for Christ, is not worthy of him,* and I desire to give glory to his name. I consider that I must part with all for Christ, I strove hard against my own weakness; and my heart said, that God was just in all his dealings with me.

I thought, when I had considered of it, that I did but suffer as an evil doer my self; but our cause was Gods, and our Enemies Popish Rebels; *Paul* was ready not only to suffer, but to dye at *Jerusalem* for the name of Christ; so I took it patiently, giving glory to God, and believing that God, who was come so near me, would not forsake me. I was assured with much joy, that the Lord would bring me to himself, and in this confidence did rejoyce with my wounded Child, and a little Daughter in a Barn where we were put, having got a piece of an old Bible; and then and since I have found much settledness in my faith from several Promises of the Lord, revealed in his holy Word, some of which follow, *John 15. 7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.* I trust in God never to depart from his word, and therefore hope to find comfort in the end, and do find comfort in the way. In that Christ abideth with me, *Matth. 5. 6. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.* Though the Lord hath thus emptyed me of some worldly comforts, yet he hath given me an hanging and thirsting Soul after

ter himself, and therefore I laid hold of this promise of blessedness, as made to me, *Matth. 11. 28.* where Christ saith, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* It this I have been, and still am much comforted, in the greatest afflictions, that God hath laid upon me, in whom alone is true rest.

And as further testimonies of my love to God, and evidences of my faith, I have these comfortable inferences, which speak much peace to my Soul.

1. My love to God and Christ, is more than to all things in the World.
2. I find a great difference in my affections to God, and to the World, and the things thereof; so that my Children, which of all worldly things are most near and dear to me, yet if God should take them from me, I could freely give them.
3. I find the Spirit striving against the flesh, so that when I hear *Dr. Holmes*, speaking of that still voice, which a Believer hears, as it were, from the Spirit, it did so enlarge my heart, that for joy and great comfort it made me weep, through the influence of the Spirit sensibly then upon my heart; and so at other times also, I find much comfort in the Spirit of God, which is my greatest joy.
4. I do rejoyce mightily in the Ordinances, and especially what I hear to my self, as well as I can, and when I hear any thing against any evil that I can apply to my self, the Lord draws forth my heart frequently to pray to God, that I may do nothing that may displease him. And I thank my God, I find a full willingness in desire, and affection to submit to every truth of Jesus Christ.
5. When I hear comforts spoken of that concern me, I am so joyful, that it fills my heart, and sometimes fetches tears from mine eyes, as particularly when *Master M.* said, That afflictions were a testimony of Gods love to his people. as *Lazarus* was sorely afflicted, and dearly

beloved. 6. Since I heard Mr. B. and others, also (suitable to my condition) several things laid open by Mr. W. in some cases of Conscience; I have been much affected to settle my self so by the power of Christ, that I may find peace in my conscience in all things before I dye, and have made it my chiefbusiness, and have found comfort in the meetings of godly people. 7. I bless the name of the Lord, my affections are loving to the people of God, and I know I love them dearly, and my heart riseth to hear them spoken against; I had rather bear reproaches my self, than see any one of them wronged, or suffer. 8. I desire as to live with God in glory in Heaven, so to lead my life to his glory here on Earth in grace, according to the rule of his holy Word, and the examples of the Saints therein expressed; and I could heartily wish, were it possible, that I might never sin more. And I have I bless God a clear discerning, through the power of the Spirit of Grace, that the Gospel is the Word of truth to Salvation. 9. When I come before the Lord, I see nothing but emptiness in my self, and therefore trust in the fulness of Christ, in whose power and Spirit I find much comfort, and desire always, that I may come prepared with that wedding garment that may never be taken away from me; for of my self I can do nothing, but through Christ, if he abide in me, and I in him, I shall do all things. M. W.

XVI. Experiences of I. I.

**V**Hen I was in the midst of my wealth, and worldly enjoyments, I was vain, covetous, and wholly had my heart taken up with the things of the World, little or nothing minding the things of God, or thinking of a change, but went on in presumption, putting the evil day far off, minding only for the present what pleased the flesh,



flesh, untill about eight years since, I had many outward crosses befell me, and was in some want; and then being under that dispensation, I was much troubled, and full of grief, I sought to the Lord, and begged deliverance from my afflictions and distresses, as to outward wants, but had not an heart to consider what was the cause, or to seek out the mind of God in it, until I heard Dr. *Wines* shewing sin to be the cause of all our crosses. The consideration hereof did come close unto my spirit, and I had a clear conviction of my vanity, and foolish doting on worldly things, which had justly provoked the Lord, I hope for my good, to lay those crosses upon me, which, though they were for a time bitter, yet God hath since sweetned,

But my sorrow was then doubled, and I was dejected, not only for my outward crosses, but more especially for my carnal heart, and vain conversation, whereby I had stirred up the anger of the Lord against me: I went to the Ordinances, hoping to find comfort from the Word; but the weight of my sins, and my sufferings so pressed me down, that I found much heaviness. My sins especially lay heavy upon me, and I saw little hope of comfort; yet the Lord was pleased to work in my heart a loathing of sin, as well as trouble for the affliction it had brought upon me. But about a year since, I heard Master *W.* prove by Scripture, in a Sermon very effectual to my comfort, that those who have been the greatest of sinners, if they do heartily and really repent, and turn to God by faith in Christ, and lead a new life, the Lord will receive them to mercy. Hereupon I argued with my Soul, that though I had been a great sinner, yet the Lord had brought my heart to a loathing of those sins I loved; and of all sins, and to turn to the Lord, and sincerely to desire to serve him: That  
therefore,

therefore there was hope of mercy for me: I heard Mr. W. Mr. M. and others, and frequented divers meetings, where I found much comfort,

Those several places of Scripture, in which I chiefly found comfort from the Promises of God are, *Matth. 11. 28, 29, 30.* where Christ saith, *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your Souls: for my yoke is easie, and my burden light.* This made me to hope, that as the Lord hath given me an heavy heart laden with the sense of sin, so Christ Jesus will give me comfort: for in the 12 verse of the same Chapter, it is said, *a bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench.* And though I had dishonoured Christ, yet I had not blasphemed the Holy-ghost, and therefore had encouragement to believe from the words of Christ, *Luke 12. 10.* *Whoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him, but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.* I was comforted, to wait upon the Lord in hope, because he had humbled my Soul, and opened mine eyes to see mercy offered to me, and this was strengthened from that example, *Lament. 30. 20.* *to verse 26.* *My Soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me.* This I recall to mind; therefore have I hope. It is the Lords mercy that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: Great is thy faithfulness, the Lord is my portion, saith my Soul, therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the Soul that seeketh him. I was much encouraged from hence to seek the Lord, and hope in his mercy.

My conscience told me, I was a great sinner, and

and deserved death and Hell, but my hope was in God, and strengthened from that promise, Ezek. 18. 21, 22, 23. *If the wicked will turn from his sins, that he hath committed, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawfull and right, he shall surely live, he shall not dye: All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: In the righteousness that he hath done he shall live.* Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked shall dye, saith the Lord God, and not that he should turn from his ways and live? And the Lord was pleased to put into my spirit a very great resolution to serve him for the time to come, and I praise my God, I have had since much joy in duties of Piety, and much sweetness from the Word of God, and goldly Ministers; I have no desire to enjoy the pleasures and vanities of the World, as I have done, but my heart now takes delight in God, and communion with his people; and the Lord hath given me an heart to discern a beauty, and desirableness, in the ways of God, which are more joyfull to me now, than ever sin was formerly; and when I come at the Ordinances, I often find and feel such heavenly refreshments from the Lord upon my heart, that it makes me exceeding full of joy. There is such a love upon my heart to God, that I dare not willingly offend him in any thing; I rejoyce to hear his name spoken of, and his glory exalted: And I find a very great affection drawn by the power of God from my heart to such as seem to be his people. *J. J.*

*XVII. Experiences of E. C.*

**A**Bout nine years agoe at the Birth of a Child, I had very great temptations of destroying my self, and have had oftentimes a knife put into my hand to do it, so that I durst not be left by myself alone; and when I had considered what

the causes might be, my Conscience did hint most my neglecting of duties which I had many opportunities to have performed, they being the Ordinances of God. Thus I continued till two years agoe I buried a Child, which was a very great trouble to me to part with, and then was I more fully convinced of sin, which caused my burthen to be the greater, so that I could seldom have any other thoughts but of desperation; but the Lord kept me by his great mercy, so that sometimes I could pray with devotion, and discern the Lord to remove this great trouble from me; I did plainly find that those great temptations were very much lessened, which was a very great comfort unto my Spirit; but yet this still was upon me, that I could read the Promises, but I found none of them to belong to me; I could not say, God was mine, or had discovered him self to me, in pardoning my sins; yet this I had often thoughts of, that I would throw my self upon Christ, and if I perished I perished; and since, I bless God, I have found some satisfaction, in several places of Scripture: As,

First, In Matth. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* And feeling such a burthen then upon my Soul, I relied upon that true rest. Another is in 1 John 2. 2. *And he is the reconciliation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole World.* I being one in the World, I applyed this to my self; and in 1 John 1. 14. *The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World.* Another place of Scripture is, John 3. 17. *For God sent not his Son into the World to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be saved.* And in verse 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.* Upon this account I said, *I believe, Lord, help my unbelief.* And in the sixth Chapter of John, and 67, and

and 68, verses, *Jesus said unto his Disciples Will ye go from me also?* Peter said unto him, *Lord, whither shall we go, for thou hast the words of eternal life.* So that I will now wait upon the Lord for a further manifestation of himself unto my Soul, in the use of his Ordinances; although I have not in times past been fed with the Childrens bread, yet now I do believe I shall not be denyed those crumbs of Spiritual comforts, to nourish and refresh my wearyed Spirit; for God saith, *Isa. 55. 1. Ho! everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy Wine and Milk without money, and without price.* And I praise God, I have found of late a very great manifestation of Gods working a change upon my heart, and drawing me by true faith to himself.

1. About a quarter of a year since, I heard Mr. B. on the luke-warmness of the Church of *Laodicea*, shewing that the Lord would refuse none that come to him in humbleness of Spirit, and sincerity of heart; then I thought surely I might make use of these full promises made to those that come to him; and it put me to search the Scriptures, which I did; and found a greater influence upon my spirit in the understanding of the Word than before. 2. I am in all things that I do, fearful of offending God, and my desire is, to do all things to his glory. 3. My love to God is so hearty, that I delight to be meditating of God, and to have communion with him, and could wish that I might be wholly, if it were possible, with God; and my heart is never so at rest, as when I am reading of his Truths, and hearing others speak of them. 4. I am so little affected to the World, that I account it nothing; I can willingly leave all for God, and I hope suffer any thing for God, if he should please to call me to it, so far as I can judge of my own heart, but herein trust-

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ing in the power of Christ. 5. Sin is loathsome to me, so that the affections that I did bear to some evils are gone, and I now loath them more than before I loved them. 6. I have many conflicts between the flesh and the spirit, but I find (in those strivings) my heart most cleaving to follow the mind of God, knowing that if I give way to sin, Satan enters; and with all my Soul I desire and delight to follow the leadings of Gods Spirit. 7. In all things the resolutions of my heart are for doing those things that may please God, and that without delay; being fearful to offend God, which through infirmity I do, I have great trouble in spirit for it; and my resolutions are always against every thing that may hinder my peace with God. 8. I find in my heart so great a peace between God and my Conscience, that should God now call me, I shall be very well contented to go to my Saviour. 9. I do not doubt of Gods love to me, because he hath drawn forth my heart sincerely to love him. 10. My love hath been always from a Child to the people of God, and my heart hath been ever troubled when I have heard them evil spoken of. 11. My affections are great to the Ordinances, and my heart longeth after them; and when at any time I come with a cold heart to Duties, yet my heart is frequently warmed, and enlarged in those duties. E. C.

XVIII. *Experiences of D. M.*

**S**OME years since, through many crosses increasing upon me, like an armed man, I flew unto God to seek his mind by prayer, and he discovered to me that it was for my sins, which were then set before me; which caused me to feel the hand of God by afflictions upon me, that sin was the cause of my sufferings; which lay very heavy upon me, and terrified me, so that I thought I had been in the

the way to damnation: And that if it had been in the way to Salvation, every affliction would not come so upon me, greater than I thought I could be able to bear: In particular, the Lord discovered to me, that I had too much loved my Husband in making an Idol of him, and therefore he justly became a great terror to my Spirit, for he grew an enemy to goodness, and so an hindrance to me in coming to Christ; And while I thus doted on him, he went away from me: I feared, through the sense of that and other sins, together with the aggravations of my afflictions, that God did not love me; Yet it struck into my heart, that God did not strike willingly, and therefore I endeavoured to see what was the mind of God in it, who had taken away my Husband, Goods, and all from me; namely, that he had done it, that I should not hang upon husks, but should love him. And I found that I had loved the world too much, and set my heart too much upon these Creature-comforts, and therefore the Lord took them away from me. This wrought upon me great troubles and despair, so that I cried till I was almost blind: And I had great fear and trembling upon me, that I could not pray, nor hear with profit, but thought it was in vain for me to pray, whom God loved not, and whom I had so offended.

About a quarter of a year after, I had a temptation by Satan to drown my self in a Pond near *Leeds* in *York-shire*, whether the Devil led me, telling me that I might do it there, it being a private place where no body could see me; and I came to the Pond side, but by the providence of God, having a great love to a young Infant I had, I took that Child in my Arms, and when I came to the place, I looked upon the Child, and considered with my self, what shall I destroy my self and

and my poor Child? and cryed out unto God, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? and had a sore conflict at that time with the Devil; but me thought at last, I heard the Lord say to my Soul, as he did to *Paul*, *Trust in me, my grace is sufficient for thee.* And then I found some comfort, which enlarged my heart, through the assistance of Gods Spirit, to call upon the name of the Lord, for further assistance and comfort, and so I went back again with much joy, believing that I should have the favour of God. And the Lord put it into my mind to go to one *E. B.* that dwelt by a Moor side near *Leeds*, whom I knew was a godly Woman, and she opened to me the troubles of *David* and *Job*, and gave me sweet comfort, saying, God was by me, and I did not see him, and as *Job* wished, so she wrought upon my heart to wish, *O that I could see him, O that I could behold him,* and my heart was full of joy, and I cryed, and was much grieved, with very great repentance that I had been so seduced, and did so despair of Gods mercies, and had been so blinded. And the Lord set it upon my spirit, that though I had laid all aside, yet now I should come out of the *Wilderness leaning on my Beloved*; and I had a greater affection to the ways of God than ever, and delighted in them more than ever. Before they were a burthen to me, now they were easie and sweet.

Being at *York*, I heard a Minister there out of *Hosea 2.* preach that which wrought much comfort in me, and that Christ had promised to betroth himself to every Believer: And then, and since I have much joy in the promises of God, and can through the Spirit of God, which I find and feel in my heart, lay hold by faith on them, as my particular interest. As *Rom. 10. 4.* *Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*  
Christ



Christ by his Spirit hath wrought belief in me, both in his promises, and threatnings, and to live according to his Word, therefore I conclude, that I shall be saved by the righteousness of my Saviour, Rom. 9. 4. *Who are Israelites? to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God and the promises?* I know that every Believer is a true Israelite, and brought under the Covenant of grace by Jesus Christ, and that therefore the promises of grace and Salvation belong to me, Rom. 3. 21, 22. *But now the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the Righteousness of God, which is by Faith of Jesus unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference: I being one whom God hath drawn to believe; it is manifested unto me, that I have an interest in the Righteousness of Jesus Christ, to justify me before God by his merits, which are made mine by faith, Hosea 2. 19, 20. I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercy; I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.* I find great comfort from this promise, in that the Lord doubles and trebles his Promises, and enlargeth himself so freely to the Soul.

And as testimonies of my real conversion to God, and union with Jesus Christ, and that reconciliation is made between God and my Soul, I find these real evidences wrought by Gods blessed Spirit in me. 1. I find in my heart great love to God, that when God saith, *Seek my face;* my heart rejoyns again, saying, *thy face Lord will I seek.* And I find nothing so dear to me as the love of God, and if my heart deceive me not, I could bear and suffer

fer any thing to bring glory to God, *accounting all things but dung and dross below Christ.* 2. When any thing of the flesh ariseth against the motions of Gods Spirit to draw me from good, or to do evil, I find frequently the power of the Spirit to subdue my heart not to submit to the flesh, but to walk in his way, and yet I am so sensible of my infirmities, that all that I do, or can do is nothing, but as filthy rags; but I know Jesus Christ is my Saviour, and stands engaged for me, and when the flesh is weakest, I find the Spirit thirsteth after God. 3. I find in my heart a very great thirsting after the Ordinances, and a great enlargement of heart, and comfort in them, my heart being delighted to be among the people of God, and full of joy in them. 4. When thoughts of want at any time arise, I find full satisfaction in the better part, which never can be taken from me, which is my interest in Jesus Christ; And I find in my Conscience a great testimony of my Spiritual union with God, and that I am so separated from the world in my affections, that God hath drawn me to himself. 5. God who searcheth the heart, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the Saints according to the will of God, which will of God I find a free submission to in my heart with joy; knowing, *that all things shall work together for good to them that love God.* 6. It is the chiefest desire of my heart, that God would keep me close to my duty, and I have abundance of joy in communion with the Lord, which is more sweet to me, than my joy in any thing else. 7. I delight much to speak of God, and of his ways, and to use what means I can to comfort the Saints, whom I love dearly, and if possible to convert sinners.

*XIX. Experiences of A. L.*

**I** Had lately great grief upon my Spirit about a Daughter, which was brought to great sufferings, and by reason of her going away in her affliction, I thought she had made away her self: God put it into my thoughts to remember my sins; and that he had laid this affliction upon me, for neglecting my duty to him, and not serving him as I ought. This caused great sorrow in me, and made me abundantly shed tears, my sins I thought were the occasion that the Lord made her so great a cross to me, for which I had deserved it, so that both became a great grief to my Soul; and thus I lay languishing in very great sorrow: Then I began to think with my self that there is no refuge but only in Christ; and I consulted my thoughts, how to go to good company and meetings, where I might find comfort from the people of God. And about two years since, one morning I came to Mr. S. to joyn with godly people that came thither to prayer, though with a great deal of distraction in my mind; and I shewed my discontents and condition to him, and he told me, that if I had but a mind to seek God, and to repent, he was gracious, and would receive me to mercy: The thing that I did earnestly beg of God was, to know Christ crucified for me, and he told me, that indeed was best of all: And after some good instructions from him and others, I was much delighted to frequent the meetings of Gods Servants, and good Sermons; and I found many good operations upon my heart. After very strong conflicts, when I had thus for about three quarters of a year, lying in my bed, waking all the night, and calling upon God to direct me to ask at his hands those things which might be for his glory, and my comfort, and begging that he would give me a settled heart that might not

not be distracted with the things of the World. In the morning I fell into a slumber, with God still in my thoughts, in which I heard as it were a voice from Heaven speaking to my heart, and saying thus, *Ask of God a perfect upright heart to walk in his presence*; which when I was fully awake, I took to be the motion of Gods Spirit upon my Conscience, which did fill me with much joy, provoking me to pray to the Lord to grant me that grace.

And about two years since, the Lord gave me a sense of my sins in a greater measure than before, and my repentance was more spiritual, and my hatred of sin more real. And I found a sore combat betwixt the flesh and the spirit, being more sensible how I had strayed from the rule of the Gospel, and did yet come short of my duty therein, and it was a great grief to my heart, that I could not live according to that which God had revealed of his will to me. Whilst I was thus troubled in spirit, I heard some things in several Sermons preached by Master B. touching the sins of our natural corruptions, and what holiness God requires of us. And I heard Mr. C. shew that we should strive to *enter in at the narrow gate* which wrought in my heart a very great sense of my sins.

In these conflicts I met with many discouragements, and Satan tempted me to despair, but the Lord sustained me. I considered that as a sinner, I deserved nothing but Damnation, but my comfort was in Christ, and my grief was interlaced with comforts: Sometimes I was in sorrow two or three days, and then again found comfort, and often prayed unto the Lord to lay no more weight upon me, then he would give me strength to bear, and I found the Lord to be my shield and buckler, and remembered many promises from the Lord, in which  
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to this day, I bless God, I have, and still do find much comfort. As Psal. 34. 19. *Many are the afflictions of the Righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all:* I have had many afflictions for my sins, but none but Christs righteousness is my comfort, in whom I trust for deliverance. Ezekiel 33. 11. *As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his evil way, and live; turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye dye, O ye house of Israel,* Matt. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Ezekiel 18. 30. *Repent and turn your selves from all your transgressions, for iniquity shall not be your ruine,* Isaiah 43. 25. *I, even I am he, that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*

These and divers other promises, I praise God, I have had comfort from, and as the fruits of my faith, and my love to God, I have these Evidences wrought by his Spirit through faith in my heart, as a further manifestation of my interest in Christ.

1. I believe in the Promises of the free mercies of God, in the merits of Christ, and can apply them with comfort to my own Soul, as mine by faith.
2. My heart and my mind affects God above all the pleasures and joys in the World, and when I think of the things of the World in relation to God, I think that without God all is but vain and vanity.
3. When I think of my crosses and afflictions in the World, then I lift up my heart to God in Christ, and can say, *Having thee, I have all things; if I have Christ, I have enough.*
4. My heart rejoices in duties, and my Soul doth more rejoyce in hearing the Word, than in worldly pleasures.
5. I have the peace of God upon my conscience, which is more to me than all things in the world, and makes

makes me set the world at naught, and it is my prayer, that I may never be without that peace of God whatever befalls me. 6. The Lord hath given me a contented mind in what condition soever he brings me to, and his Spirit worketh upon my heart, that I do not repine against his will. E. L.

XX. Experiences of J. B.

**S**OME time agoe a Child of mine about six years of age, when I have bid him go forth to play, he hath come in again very solitary, because other Children would swear and be rude, I would ask him, Robert, what aileth you, why do you not go to play? he would answer, That he had no fellows to play withal, but such as would swear, and the like, and they cannot be (said he) Gods children. I would say, why not Child? then he would say, No Mother, though I am but a little way in my Book, yet I have learnt, that God will not pardon such sins as swearing; I have sometimes said, Yes Child, I hope God will pardon them, else God help thy Father, and God help us all: Then he hath replied, Mother, with great repentance God can forgive, for his mercies are great; but good Mother, let us forbear that which is evil. And many times I had such conference with that Child, that seeing me troubled about it, he hath said, Good Mother be content, their Parents are such, and they must needs learn after them.

I thought upon my Childs words, and having before often offended God on the Lords Days, and the thoughts of other failings in my conversation, it wrought great trouble upon my heart, so that I was much afflicted in Soul, considering that my Child so young, should give me such instructions, which hath proved a blessing to bring me home to him; I did then make some doubt whether God would forgive me those sins, and about that time hearing

hearing Dr. Usher preach several Sermons, and particularly upon that Text, *That we are but sojourners and travellers here*; and shewing that we are not at home, therefore we must keep on in the straight way to Heaven, and take heed of the broad way, which leadeth to Hell, this and other means since, did throw me down low under the sense of sin, yet not without sometimes some refreshments. And from a Sermon preached by Dr. Usher, *That the Lord is the shield and defence of those that trust in him*, I had some comfortable hopes in the Lords mercies; but I found many doubtings still; yet about seven years since, Master Tompson made a Sermon at Liverpool, then besieged, shewing, *That we must lay hold on the Lord, and hold fast, and he will lead us through all Troubles*; and soon after it was lost, and many were killed, but I bless God I had no hurt at all, which did much comfort me that the Lord of his mercy had delivered me; I did, and still do hope, that the Lord had a mind to save me, and to draw me nearer to himself; which together with some other deliverances of the Lords great mercy; I took great comfort in, so that when I had scarce bread and water, (and I have been streightned since) yet I found still comfort from the Lord for my self, and to be an instrument to help others, who were prisoners.

And the Lord then, and since hath by his Spirit comforted me with several Promises, which I praise God I can apply to my self, by which I have a testimony of my true belief, some of which are these which follow, Gen. 15. 1. *The Word of the Lord came unto Abraham in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward*. I had found the Lord to be my shield in those many deliverances he had wrought

for me, and had taken away that distrustful fear, which before was upon me, and therefore I was, and still am confident he will be my exceeding great reward, Psal. 119. 97. *Thou art my portion, O Lord, I have said that I would keep thy words.* The same God wrought in my heart, to say with David, that I would keep thy Word, O Lord; and tho I cannot as I should, yet my desire is to keep it, my mind is to keep it; therefore I presume with David to say, *Thou art my portion, O Lord.* John 15. 5. Christ saith, *I am the Vine, ye are the Branches, he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing.* I know my self to be nothing without Christ, and though I have infirmities, yet my heart abides in Christ. And therefore I hope to find righteousness, and salvation not in my self, but in Christ, desiring also that I may bring forth fruit as a branch in him, Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit:* I find my self to be one of those, who walk in my heart in the ways of God, to which I am led by his Spirit, and not after the flesh, and though I cannot serve God so well as I would, I do as well as I can; and am troubled in my spirit for my failings, and therefore I believe I shall never be condemned.

And I have these testimonies of my conversion, and sincere love to God, as the fruits of my faith,  
 1. The Lord hath by his Spirit manifested to my Soul, that the *Wisdom of the Spirit is life and peace*, and hath wrought that peace in my heart, that I do not desire any way to break from it, for any other enjoyments whatsoever. 2. This I desire to be built upon, that I may find Christ to be my life and peace. 3. I find that the Lord hath greatly



ly wrought upon me, and my mind is fully affected with the Lord, out of whom I do not care for any thing that is in the World. 4. My desire is wholly to serve God, and leave all things in the World as vain trifles for the enjoyment of him. 5. My love is so much to God in Christ, that having him, I know I have all things, and without him I have nothing. 6. I find that I have great comfort, and am much refreshed by Ordinances, a sense of the Spirit is frequently brought upon my heart, and I have received a great deal of comfort therein, when I have been weak; and it hath been a refreshing to me, when food hath been scant. And particularly, from several Sermons preached by Mr. Waitaker, Mr. Marshal, Mr. Carter, and others, as also Mr. P. Dr. Hawes, Mr. W. and at other meetings of godly people. 7. I find that the comfort of the Ordinances are more sweet to me, than all the pleasures, riches, or friends in the world; for they are contenting comforts, and so are not worldly things. 8. I could find in my heart willingly to dye, and leave Children, Brothers, Sisters, and all the World besides to go to my Christ. *J.B.*

*XXI. Experiences of A. J.*

**W**HEN it pleased God to call my Husband from me, I was for a time as exceedingly cast down, and troubled, as I think any poor creature could be; in which I was so overwhelmed, that I did not know which way to turn my self, nor what to do, yet was seeking the Lord, to find out what was his mind in the thing: I had lost a good estate, had no body to look after my business, had many injured me, and had lost above the rest a pious Husband, whom I intirely loved, yet the Lord put it into my heart, that all this was to wean me from my sins, and too much doting upon

an Husband, and other worldly enjoyments, which my heart was too much taken up with, therefore the Lord was pleased to strip me of them in a great measure, to bring me nearer to himself. I went to divers places to hear several Ministers, and by waiting upon the Ordinances to seek after the Lord, if possible I might find comfort and satisfaction to my Soul here; but continued in much affliction upon my spirit, for near a years time; at last I heard Master Jenkins preaching out of the 21. Chapter of John the 18. and 19. verses, *Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thy self, and saidst whether thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not.* This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. The consideration of which dispensation from God to him, drew forth my heart to be contented with whatsoever the Lord should be pleased to lay upon me: And I was satisfied to suffer or bear any thing, in that it was the Lords will to glorify himself, by such dispensations towards the Saints. And the Lord hath since made me as he did David, to be contented as well with his Rod, as with his staff; and then, and since, I praise the Lord, I can say with David, *It was well for me that I was afflicted.* I was comforted with that example of the woman in the Gospel, to whom it was said by Christ, *that it is not lawful to take the childrens bread, and cast it to dogs,* in that I could say with her, *Truth Lord, but the dogs may lick the crumbs that fall from their Masters Table;* I remembered Gods dispensations towards Job and David, and resolved with Joshua, *that I and my house would serve the Lord.* And although it was a bitter pill to me to bear the cross before, yet now my God hath made it ease; and I praise the

the Lord, through his grace, I can go under it with a great deal of comfort; and he hath now discovered to me the way of his working in those things, which before were wonderful strange to me.

Many special promises I found great comfort in, some that I remember are these that follow, (viz.) 1 Pet. 5. 6, 7. *Humble your selves therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Casting all your care on him, for he careth for you.* This promise I have found of a truth made good to me in some measure, I have applied it often, and have found the comfort of it. 2 Cor. 1. 29. *My grace is sufficient for thee.* From this place I found much comfort, knowing the fulness of so glorious a portion, Jam. 1. 2, 3, 4. *Count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the tryal of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and intire, wanting nothing.* This administered great joy to me against all temptations. Isa. 55. 1. *Ho! every one that thirsteth, Come ye to the waters of life, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat.* This gave great comfort to my Soul at several times, though it was so much cast down.

And that which gives me great content and comfort is, the seal of Gods Spirit in my heart, giving evidence of peace in the blood of Christ, between God and my Soul, by these testimonies 1. My love to God is so, that I am confident (if the Lord keep me with his Spirit, which at this time he hath bestowed upon me) I could be content to part with any thing, or lay down my life for his glory, if he would call me to it. The Lord hath been pleased so to enrich my Soul with his Spirit, that I loath the things of the World,

when they would draw me in any thing, from submitting to the motions of Gods Spirit in my heart: I once thought nothing could have drawn me from the love of the vain things of the world; but now I do as much disdain them for God, and more than then I loved them. 3. I desire to follow Gods Ordinances, and find great enlargments of my heart to God, both to, and in the Ordinances: And particularly from Mr. S. Mr. W. and others, from whom many things have fallen that have much refreshed my Soul, and I find my heart in duties to God, more refreshed than in any thing. 4. I find much peace in my conscience, because of a free submission which his Spirit hath wrought in my Soul to all the commands of Jesus Christ; and I find comfort in that true circumcision which is in my heart, wrought by his Spirit. 5. I find every day so great a peace in my Soul, and such comfort in God, that I could be willing, and I bless God, find in my self a readiness to dye every moment.

XXII. *Experiences of A. A.*

**A**BOUT two years since, my Husband was sore wounded, which I took as a great tryal, not having above a month to go with Child, and I was troubled at it: And about a quarter of a year after I was up, all my Children were sick together of the small Pox. Yet all this did not work upon me inwardly so sensibly as about a month afterwards that one of my Children dyed suddenly, when I thought he had been near well, then I said, the wages of sin is death, thinking that the Lord had warned me by Fatherly threatnings before, but I did not hearken to him, and therefore I thought he smote me now, by the death of my Child. But yet I could not enter into any particular sins that God should strike at, only in general, I sought the

the Lord to lay open my sins to me; I was very much troubled, that the Lord took my child so suddenly from me, but was comforted by Mr. *Strong*, in some Sermons preached from the words the Church to *Paul*, going to suffer at *Jerusalem*, Acts 21. 14. *When he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.* So I was settled pretty well in my thoughts, till suddenly the Lord struck the elder of my two Children then living, which was a Boy, my other, which is a Girl, I did not so much value, but now I do, and know Gods mercy in sparing her, but my Child that then dyed was the chief comfort that my heart was fixed upon in this world, which was so great a grief to me, that I have slept few nights quiet, I desired to know the mind of God, what he would do with me; Sometimes I should have dispaired through great buffetings inwardly, but that the Lord sustained me. Sometimes I thought that the wrath of God was kindled against me, thinking never to have comfort in this world again. But blessed be the Lord for it, he hath often comforted me in this, that I have thought he did it in love to me; yet sometimes I have feared that I should despair, and that the hand of God was against me in it, having been troubled with thoughts, that I was the death of my children.

Thus I have been between hope and despair, and could not find what the Will of God was in it towards me: And I had fears that the hand of God was still against me, for further punishment, because I have had many temptations upon me, in low thoughts of God. But I have gone to prayer, and desired the Lord to deliver me, and discover his mind to me, in every thing that I do, and have found a willingness to part with any thing, even to cut off a limb, or any thing if I could find

out, what it was: And I bleſs God I have found a good Spirit reſiſting the bad. Yet I have been under much fear, that I was not a child of God. But it hath pleaſed God to comfort me in this, that *Pauls* life was ſubject to temptations, therefore I had hope and caſt my ſelf upon the mereies of God, reſolving that if I *perish*, I *perish*, never daring to offend willingly in any thing, that I know to be a ſin; yet I know I am a wretched ſinner, but I humbly deſire to do the will of God, ſo far as I am able. And in that I can ſay with *David*, *Pſal.* 42. 1. *As the heart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God.* I find comfort with him to ſay, *Why art thou caſt down, O my Soul? and why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praise him, for the help of his countenance,* verſe 5. And I will look unto the Lord, with the Prophet *Micha*, I will wait for the God of my Salvation, my God will hear me, *Mich.* 7. 7. And I have found much comfort in applying ſeveral promiſes to my Soul. As *Matth.* 5. 4. *Chriſt ſaith, Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted:* As God hath given me a mourning Spirit for my ſins, ſo I believe that in his time I ſhall be comforted, and I have taſted I bleſs God, of the comforts of his Spirit in my Soul. *Iſaiah* 55. 1. The Lord ſaith, *Ho! every one that thiſteth come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye buy, and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.* As the Lord hath made my Soul to thiſt for him, ſo I doubt not but to find him. And the Lord ſays, *Ezek.* 33. 11. *As I live, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live;* I thank God, my heart and ſoul is turned from all things, and is only after the Lord. And in a ſpecial manner, I have found ſweet evidences of my faith and intereſt in  
God

God through Christ; I had lately much comfort from a Sermon preached by Mr. Irving, who shewed that afflictions did not make us low in the sight of God; though before me, as also from the words at a conference by Mr. V. *That in the World we shall have tribulations; but in God rest.* And 2. I do clearly find that my love is more set upon God than upon any thing. 3. I could more willingly leave the world now, than ever before, and I could willingly dye, if God saw it good, in the mind I am. 4. I find in my heart that I do not cast my self upon God, that I have peace with him. 5. In times of doubtings, I find comfort that I have a God to call upon and I find much peace in my mind in return from God. 6. I do always find when any evil thoughts arise, a power from God which subdues them, so that I never willingly give way to them. 7. I find my affections ready to go forth both to duties, and in duties to God; and when I come to them with little affection, yet I bless God I find a great deal of comfort usually before I go away. 8. I find the most comfort to my spirit is, when I am weeping for my infirmities, or in prayer, or duties, in publick or private, and methinks I find such joy in them, that I could dwell there, having no comfort in the world like that. 9. I find in my heart a real love to all if any have wronged me, I desire no revenge, but that I may be at peace with all.

9. Whatsoever I find to be a truth from God and a motion of his Spirit, I find in my soul a willing submitting to it.

XXIII Experiences of B. C.

**A**BOUT 16. years of Age, though I did not understand the Word, yet I had a great desire to go to hear, because they served God therein that did so, knowing that there is a God that ought to be served.

And I sat in corners studying what way might come to God if I should dye; having a very great affliction wrought by the Lord upon my spirit; praying as well as I could, that my self, and my Father, and Mother, and Friends, might go to God when we dye. And I was very much set upon duties, thinking to find God there; but afterwards lived in a Family, where I was much hindered from the Ordinances, or partaking of any thing of God, which was a great grief unto me. Yet sometimes I had thoughts towards worldly things, pondering how to be rich, or fine as others, but God wrought in my heart a remorse to check those temptations. And frequently the Lord laid some affliction or other upon me to wear me the more from such vain thoughts, which brought my heart into a very sad condition many times; and sometimes I have wept day and night; And at other times, through grief that I could not sorrow enough, I have fallen into a great measure of weeping.

After, I had lived in several other Families, where I had little comfort; About twenty years since, hearing Mr. F. and Mr. P. on Lords-days, I was much comforted, and also by Mr. Marshall, and others; and from the consideration of the Love of God in Christ, and the sufferings of Christ for us, as also of the Woman that did but by Faith touch the hem of Christs garment, how she was comforted and healed, and I had much comfort in private meetings. But about five years since, seeing my other Neighbours many of them flourish and prosper in the World more than I, I began to doubt that I did but play the Hypocrite, and that perhaps they did pray more at home than I, though I knew some of them went less to the publick Ordinances, I was very much troubled at this, and thought with my self, Lord, shall I still lye at the Pool, and find



no body to put me in, that I may be healed? and I was much troubled because many of my Neighbours hated me for frequenting private meetings. And for above a month I spent much time in private prayer, and often in the night upon my Bed, and went to hear only on the Lords-days. But then I had thoughts upon me, that it was not pleasing to God to pray unto him upon a soft Bed. Then the Lord put it in my heart, that he had promised, *That where two or three are met together in my name, that I will be in the midst of them*: This caused me to go again, as I had done before, to hearing of Sermons on week-days. But still I found many reasonings and doubtings upon my spirit, whether I was elected or not, and was much cast down many times about it, and had some temptations to despair, fearing that such a sinner as I, could not be saved. Yet I had comfort in this, that though I was a sinner, God by his Spirit had mortified me. And though I am not so good as I should be, yet through the power of grace, I am not so bad as the flesh would be; and finding much of the testimony of Gods Spirit upon my heart, I had great hope that I had marks and tokens of my believing.

One night (having for about half a years time before used to go to Bed before I prayed) being in Bed, and thinking to pray to God, I had strange temptations upon me, to put God out of my mind, and I could not speak a word, nor scarce think of God, and if I did in some intervals, I could not name God, or Christ, nor speak a word to God for the present. And Satan then seemed to appear to me in a most ugly shape, laughing and jeering at me, which did much affright me, and I feared that I had played the Hypocrite with God, and now should run mad, to make good what some had reproach-

reproachfully cast upon me, that I was an Hypocrite and I was rising out of my Bed, but it pleased the Lord to put it into my mind, that Christ Jesus hath not given so much for Soules, as he hath done, to let the Devil have them for nothing. And in the strength of the Lord I repulsed the Devil, saying, 'Satan, when thou in tempting Christ shewedst him the whole World, thou promisedst him that which was none of thine own; nor am I thine, and therefore avoid Satan, for thou hast nothing to do with me, and then the Devil departed from me.

Then my heart was much filled with the thoughts of the goodness of God, and with a mixture of fears and joy, I had sweet comforts from the Lord. And though I have had many doubts upon my spirit sometimes, yet I have since found very great consolation through Faith in the promises of God, as in these, and divers others, *Matth. 11. 28. Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. I thank God I have found much rest and refreshment by coming to Christ, and that his grace is sufficient for me. Matth. 5. 6. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.* I have often laid hold on this promise with a thirsting desire after Jesus Christ, and he hath filled me with comfort, And the comfort wherewith Christ did comfort Peter, bidding him not to fear, for he had prayed for him, hath been upon my spirit, and given me great consolation, in that I know Christ is heard in all that he prayeth to the Father. And I find the Testimonies of my Conversion to God, which give satisfaction to my Soul, that I am a true Believer.

1. Though I do all that I can to serve God, as he hath commanded me, yet I find great imperfection, and utter unworthiness in my self to de-  
serve

serve any thing of God. But my whole dependence and hope of Salvation is in Gods free grace in the blood and merits of my Saviour Jesus Christ. 2. I do find that the Love of God in Christ constrains me to love God again, above all things in the World, and whatever I am about, my Soul is delighted with God above all. 3. I find that the Lord draws my heart to hate all evil communication and evil things, and not so much to fear the punishment of the World for any thing, as to sin against God. 4. I am much delighted in the workings of Gods Spirit, and it is a great joy and comfort to my Soul, when my heart is enlarged towards God. 5. My heart is much affected unto Ordinances and if Satan suggested worldly thoughts to hinder me from duties, I have called upon God, and found comfort, and when I have come to duties with cold affections, I have been much refreshed in the duties, & though sometimes I have felt pain and distemper in my body, which I have thought Satan hath done to make me weary in duties, yet I have called on the Lord, and found comfort. 6. I find great peace and much comfort in the Lord, so that I could be willing to dye, and it is a great joy to me, in that I expect to dye, that I may be delivered from the afflictions of the World, to enter into eternal joy with Christ for ever.

A. G.

XXIV<sup>th</sup> Experiences of A. G.

**I** Have been many years since very sensible of my Natural Estate, and did lye long under the sence of my sins, which were so great a burden to me, that they made me almost despair, insomuch that I could scarce either eat or drink, but had my spirits dried up with the anguish thereof. For I was brought up under the Means, and from a Child frequented the hearing of the Word. And the first  
cause

cause of my great torment was, for that I once told a Lye against my Conscience, which so lay upon my spirit afterwards, that I could receive no comfort; I went to hear the Word, and read the Scriptures, yet all did but increase my horror.

Several Ministers and godly People used great means to comfort me, but all in vain for a time; and when I read the Scriptures, I found every threatening and judgment therein, that I fixed my thoughts upon, to speak terrour to my Soul; and my distraction was so great, that my Friends said I was mad, and kept the Bible from me. For so often as I read in it, I pored most upon that dreadful place, *Matth. 12. 31. All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.* I did not know what the sin against the Holy Ghost was, but I had a perswasion I had committed that sin, and feared that my sins could not be pardoned, and that I should never go to Heaven, but was cast off to the damned. Yet this the Lord wrought for me, and in me, by his blessed Spirit, to draw forth my heart to be often praying in that poor doubting way my spirit could, by the Lords assistance vouchsafed to me, attain unto; for though I thought it in vain, and that God would not hear me, yet I continued praying, and often cryed to God, not only in the day time, but frequently in the night, and rise out of my Bed to pray to God to have mercy upon me. And I was sometimes a little comforted, in that I was perswaded to hope in the Lord, but yet it was dashed again through fear that I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. And I thought that all victuals, and every thing, was too good for me, and that I was unworthy of all enoyments: Thus I lay for some months in a sad Agony wrastring with tempta-

tions, perplexed between hope and despair.

But at last in hearing Mr. W. Minister of B. and reading a Book called *The New Birth*, I found comfort, being better satisfied what the sin against the Holy Ghost was than before, since which I bless God, I have for some years past, found much comfort from the Promises of God revealed in his holy Word, some of which follow. *Matth. 5. 6. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.* My chief desires are after Jesus Christ, and to follow him by the Rule of the Gospel, not doubting but that I shall be blessed in that grace which he communicates to me from his fulciels. *Matth. 11. 28. Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* This promise being to Souls laden with dejections, and universal, to all that come to Christ, hath much comforted my heart, in that by his Spirit he hath drawn forth my Soul to come to him. And as a testimony of my love to God, and evidences of my faith, I bless God I have these comfortable fruits of the Spirit of grace in my Soul.

1. Though I do all that I can to serve God, yet in all things I find infirmities in me, so that all my trust is only in the merits of my Saviour Jesus Christ. 2. Though I cannot be so holy as I should, yet I desire and labour to be as holy as I can. 3. When my heart is dull, cold, and out of order to serve God, it doth much trouble me, and in going to God I find comfort. 4. When I am hindred from duties with the People of God, it is a great grief unto me, and the manifestation of the presence of God upon my heart, is the greatest joy I find, and that which most fills and satisfies my Soul. 5. I find the want of any of Gods Ordinances to be a grief to me, and that I am at a loss therein. 6. I desire to serve God in all things,  
and

and have a real and hearty respect to his Commandments, and to do justly to all, and do find my heart chiefly drawn forth to holiness, and in all things to keep a good Conscience, and live in the fear of God. *A. O.*

## XXV. Experiences of M. M.

I Have many times had a desire to hear the Word of God, when imployed about my Calling. But I then thought to my self, that I had no body to provide for me, but if God would bestow on me so much of these outward things, as upon others in the World, then I would spend more time in hearing, praying, and reading the Word. And accordingly, as these outward things have ebbed or flowed, so hath my joy been less or more. But now God hath given me a sight of my sins, and why I had formerly no comfort, it was because I had not faith in my heart. Before God wrought that in me, instead of making use of those comforts which the Word holds forth, I spent my time in mistrusting Gods providence, who therefore justly during that time, held the sence of his spiritual consolations from me. Sometimes I was in despair (so low) that I could not apprehend any thing to be my portion but Hell. Every thing that fell not out according to my mind, I thought was a Judgment from God upon me. Yet I afterwards got comfort by these inviting promises, *Isa. 55. 1. Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price. And Ezek. 33. 11. As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: Turn ye, turn ye from you evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

I had some comfort from these promises, but

no assurance, my thoughts were various, and tho' between hope and despair, yet I resolved to go to God, knowing that he is unchangeable, and that whom he loves, he loves to the end, and that if a sinner doth repent and turn to him, he will blot all his sins and iniquities out of his remembrance. And it pleased God to bring this promise into my mind, and to help me by faith to lay hold on it, and apply it to my self, Ezek. 18. 21, 22. *If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not dye: All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him; in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.* And Christ saith, Job. 3. 16. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* And this is life eternal, to know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

I bless God he hath made me now to believe, not only in word, but to labour to bring forth the fruits thereof in a godly life and conversation. 2. I cannot but admire the free love of God to me, that though I have given ear formerly to the Devil, and to the world, and to my own wicked heart, yet God hath been thus pleased now to call me out of darkness into his most marvellous light. 3. God hath been pleased to give me faith to believe, that though sin hath abounded in me, yet grace shall now much more abound. This makes me to see the free love of God without any desert in the creature. 4. I have formerly gone about to limit God, and to be upon terms with him, that if he would give me so much of these worldly things as I thought needful, then I would spend more time in those duties which he hath commanded me. But this is contrary

contrary to the Word of God, which teacheth me now, *First, to seek the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, knowing that all other things shall be added to me that I want.* 5. And now blessed be God, he hath made me to believe this, and all other promises, so that I can by faith call God my Father, who hath promised me that *All things shall work together for good to me, because I love him.* 6. I have found something from God, of hope of mercy, since I was a faithful hearer of the word; though the Devil did before tempt me with objections to drive me to despair for sin. 7. I am now, I praise my God, comforted, in believing that God will not mention my sins against me, Christ dyed for sinners, and the ungodly; and I know that although I have been a great sinner, yet this hinders me not from laying hold on the promises. 8. I do believe, that the *Life I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God*; I see by faith, that Christ hath satisfied Gods justice for my sins in particular, and hath bid me to reckon my self in him. 9. Now being spiritually married to Christ, all the priviledges of Saints and believers belong to me. And I can say, *All is mine, and I am Christs, and Christ is Gods*; *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect?* It is God that hath justified me, *Who is he that shall condemn me?* being now justified by Faith in Christ, *I have peace with God*. 10. I know when this earthly Tabernacle is dissolved, *I shall have an abiding not made with hands, but eternal in the Heavens*; for Christ saith, *I am gone to prepare a place for you, that is, for me, and all Believers.* 11. All the promises of God in Christ, are spoken to believers, and by faith I believe they are made to me, and because he lives, I shall live also; Now Christ hath made me free, I am free indeed. 11. Christ hath done all for me, only bids me to believe



believe, which faith by his Spirit he hath wrought in me. 12. I have formerly been stirred up to hear, pray, and read upon selfish consideration of fear, that otherwise I should go to Hell. And I am ashamed to think how I have chosen rather to believe what the Devil hath said, than what God hath said. But blessed be the Lord, I now see it is free love that he forgiveth iniquity, transgressions, and sins, only because mercy pleaseth him; all that I can do cannot. 13. I am guilty before Gods justice in my self, both by original sin which came by the fall of *Adam*, and much more by those many actual sins, which I have personally committed, but I am justified by Christ. 14. I desire to shew my dutiful love in obedience to my Fathers commands, and my affections according to the rule of the Gospel to Christ my Husband, with whom I am spiritually married. 15. The Lord saith, *Come out from amongst them all ye my people; and be ye separated, and touch no unclean thing, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people. And if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayers.* I take God to witness, who knows the secrets of all hearts, that I desire to joyn in duties, not to the end that others should have a good opinion of me: I know I must leave all worldly relations, how soon I know not; but herein, I ~~shall~~ have peace, that I do as my Father hath commanded me; and I rejoyce in Christ Jesus, putting no confidence in the flesh, but only in the merits of my Saviour. *M. M.*

*XXVI. Experiences of H. W.*

**W**HEN my God appeared through his grace, to shine by his sacred Spirit into my dark Soul, my thoughts were much taken up in consideration of my sad and deplorable condition under the curse by nature, yet so, that I did withal see enough in Christ

Christ to deliver me from all, if I did attain to a true belief. But my perplexed Soul drank deep of the bitter dreggs of a sorrowful cup, before I could tast of the sweet cordials my blessed Saviour had prepared for me, wherewith I have since been often refreshed. My conscience told me, that if I ever expected deliverance from sin, death, and hell, and to have favour with God, I must devote my heart to him alone. But yet I found the love of some worldly vanities rooted so fast in my affections, that I did often put God off, and had an eye to some worldly contents, which deprived me (for that time) of enjoying peace in his presence. I often said, Lord, such a day I will leave all, and never seek my self, but thy glory in all things; and then again, Lord, after such a merry meeting, then I will shake hands with all temporal delights; and again, now Lord once more, I will have but one day of pleasure, and then I will part with all that offends thee, and not seek after any thing out of thee more. But for a time all this proved but unfaithfulness to my Saviour, and wounds to my own Spirit, the sense whereof did sadly terrifie my conscience. My Soul was much cast down, and I sat up a great part of many nights, when all the Family, where I then lived, was in bed, and with an heavy heart, and floods of tears gushing from my sorrowful eyes, I was exceedingly disquieted, pouring forth mine heart to my God, and begging mercy at the footstool of the Throne of grace.

And that which was the greatest horror upon my Spirit was, that I could not manifest my believing by a pious spiritual conversation in a faithful obedience, according to the sacred rule of the Gospel. When I have had resolutions for worldly pleasures to satisfy the desires of nature, it hath taken

taken away the comfort of my heart from spiritual duties in the interim. But I found in my Soul a great conflict in wrestling against those sad temptations, my conscience convincing me how great an enemy I was to my Soul therein, and testifying that it would be infinitely better, to leave all the vain things of the world, than to live without the love of my Saviour. But when my God was pleased to bring my heart to a frame to resolve seriously never to delay with God a moment more, my heart was so fixed on my Saviour, that I saw a sufficiency in him under any dispensation: I tasted a greater sweetness in the graces of his Spirit, than in any temporal pleasure. And I found much of the love, grace, spirit, and power of my dear Saviour appearing to refresh my troubled Soul.

And I have found much comfort from divers promises of the Lord, and particularly, Isa. 49. 8, 9. *I will preserve thee, and give thee for a Covenant of the people to establish the earth, and to cause to inherit the desolate heritages. That thou mayest say to the Prisoners, go forth, to them that are in darkness, shew yourselves.* Though I was before a Prisoner to worldly vanities, and shut up in darkness, yet Christ being sent to declare the Covenant to such, I found good warrant to apply it to my self, Ezek. 34. 22. *Therefore will I save my flock and they shall be no more a prey: T<sup>he</sup> Salvation, I applyed as promised to me, considering, that though I was a sinful man, yet it was my comfort that the Lord was my God; vers. 31. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, Mat. 5. 6. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.* God having given me an heart to hunger and thirst after my Saviour and my God above all things, I believe this promise was made to me, with many more, which gave

gave much sweet comfort and consolation to my Soul.

*And being justified by faith, I have peace with God,* through our Lord Jesus Christ, the testimony of which faith is sealed to my Soul by his blessed Spirit in these Demonstrations. 1. I find many evident testimonies of the love of God to me, which hath drawn forth my Soul to an high esteem of him, and to love him above all things. 2. I see nothing but sin in my self, and my trust is in my Saviours merits for justification. 3. I feel glorious refreshments from the heavenly gales of Gods blessed Spirit, breathing his grace into my Soul, which is the highest bliss I can desire on this side Heaven. 4. I find much comfort from the Word and Ordinances. 5. My chief desire in all things is to glorifie God. 6. I find a very great affection in my heart to the people of God, or any that I judge so to be. 7. I desire to be at peace with, and do all the good I can to all, especially *those of the household of Faith.* 8. I can heartily beg of the Lord to give me deliverance from, and strength against every sin, though never so pleasing to my nature, or which I am most prone to. 9. I find no such full joy in any thing, as I do in communion with my God. 10. I see a purity and glory in the ways of God, and Gospel-duties above all things. 11. I desire no longer to live than to glorifie God. 12. All the days of my appointed time, I wait till my change shall come. *H. W.*

XXVII. *Experiences of D. R.*

**I**T hath pleased the Lord ever since I knew a difference between good and evil, to give me a heart to seek after those things which savoured most of God. And it was my delight always to frequent the society of those whom I thought were truly godly: And upon this account, I thought my

my self to be something, when being seriously weighed, I became nothing; for I knew God but as a natural man doth, even by way of discourse; I being, as I conceive since, much in the posture of the proud Pharisee, I could say, I thank God, I was not such a person, as was given to lewdness, or vice, as others were: And being thus in my natural condition, I thought I had need of nothing, when I was as the Church of the *Laodiceans*, *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*, and that which was worst, I knew not that I was thus in ignorance, walking in darkness till the Lord brought me forth into the light; First, By convincing me of sin. Secondly, Convincing me of righteousness. The first was (according to my remembrance) about seven or eight years since.

I being in discourse with a friend, concerning something which did much displease me, wherein my answering was very cross, and my words very full of anger, I began to espy my self full of malice and envy, which did much reflect upon my own heart, and caused a wonderful grief unto me; and having never taken notice of any such thing before, it was so much the more strange to me; but calling my self to a strict examination what foundation I had laid, when the Building began to prove so rotten, it pleased the Lord, that thereby I grew more and more sensible of my own miserable condition, as being in the state of nature, a child of wrath, finding my self a lump of sin and uncleanness, and at a far distance from the ways of God, and to be in probability of nothing so much as of damnation, and ready to be cast into Hell for my sins, finding my self out of Christ, and not any hope that I should ever gain an interest in him; for I saw that without *Faith it was impossible to please him*, and that without Faith I could  
not

not think of any way to please him being lost in false ways of my own invention. And considering also, that Paul counsels the *Corinthians* to examine themselves whether they were in the faith, and (saith he) *Know ye not your own selves, whether Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be Reprobates*, and following this course, I could not otherwise judge, but that I was a Reprobate, and this condition was very burthenous unto my spirit, and neither in hearing or reading, could I for the time find any ease of this my trouble, but still I did apprehend the Lord as an angry Judge, requiring satisfaction of me for my sins.

Thus I languished, not knowing which way to steer my thoughts; but oftentimes crying out to the throne of grace, what shall I do to be saved? Sometimes I should perswade my self it was altogether impossible for me to think of being saved, or ever to gain so much faith, as to believe that Christ dyed for my sins, for I thought it would be a very great presumption in me to attempt any such thing, having often had thoughts of destroying my self. It is my desire that I may never forget the providence of God in keeping me from all dangers in this my extream doubtful condition, wherein I made not any one acquainted with my trouble but the Lord, whose work it was to deliver me. In this my spiritual bondage, when I have heard godly men encouraging poor Souls to believe in Christ, I have thought that others might, but I durst not presume, because I was no better qualified; for if I could find my self more holy, or more godly, or fuller of goodness, then there would be some hope that I might believe, and hope for the favour of God, and that Christ dyed for me.

But afterwards, God put into my heart to consider,

sider, that seeing *By the deeds of the Law, no flesh can be justified;* (for I thought before, I must have done something that should have proved meritorious) and beginning to be acquainted with an emptiness in my self, and an inability of my own to do any good, and find that it must be given me from the Lord Christ being *all in all* to the Saints. Upon this consideration I cast my self upon God, saying, *Lord, I am thy workmanship, do with me what seemeth good unto thee: If thou dost damn me, I have deserved the severest of thy judgments; thou art just, although I am for ever justly miserable.* And one day reading of Mr. Perkins his Book, treating of the smallest degree of saving-faith, which did express, that *a desire to believe was faith it self*, I was something comforted to hear of this, knowing that none could more desire it than I did, and upon this, a while, I rested satisfied: But not long after I found it a reed, whereon I had leaned, and grew again very restless, and was beat off from this stay by having the opportunity of another Book, which made me to understand that the poor man knew full well that a desire to be rich, and to be rich indeed, were two several things: And so a desire to believe, and faith it self, was not the same. For as all that desire to be rich, are not rich, so all that desire to believe, do not believe.

Being thus drove from my other principle, I began to see a more emptiness in the creature, and a greater fullness in the Creatour. And this last book by the blessing of God, through his grace did inform my judgment in many things, which were very comfortable to me. As that the love of God was the cause Christ was given for sinners, and that he became a full satisfaction to God for sins, and if we staid from Christ till we were full of good works

it might be a Symptom we should never believe : For it shewed that we must be ingrafted into Christ by faith, before we could bring forth good fruits, for *without me ye can do nothing*, saith Christ, *And whatsoever is not of faith, is sin*, These and many such like expressions in the Scripture, which God put into my mind, were very comfortable to the refreshing of my dull and weary spirit many times ; but yet fears in intervals possessed me, as not finding Christ to be made mine by Faith. For I could not say (in particular ) that God was my God, nor see that there was a reconciliation made between God and my Soul. Sometimes I would persuade my heart to venture to believe in Christ for the pardon of my sins ; But presently objections would thwart my resolutions, by concluding that I was too great a sinner : And it was not absolutely said, that Christ dyed for me.

In this condition I was for about four years, before I did thoroughly apprehend the love of God in Christ Jesus unto me : Yet the Lord was pleased at last, to work effectually upon me, by many sweet promises out of his Word, which did wonderfully rejoyce my Soul, As John 13. 15, 16. *Whoever believeth in the Son shall not perish, but have everlasting life* : This very word *whoever*, did work so kindly, and with such a sweet efficacy upon my heart, that I was constrained to submit, having not any objection against it, for it comprehended all sorts of sinners, although never so great, yet *whoever believeth in this Son of God, shall enjoy such a sweet promise, no less than eternal life*. In the 16. verse. *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*. And in Acts 10. 43. *That whoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins*. Then in Gal. 2. 20. *I live*



live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself for me; and Christ Jesus dyed for sinners, of whom I am chief: Seeing this application of Christ, that Paul made in particular to himself, who was a very great sinner, it did much imbolden me in the like, Rom. 5. 8, 9. God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ dyed for the ungodly: and I was ungodly, therefore I believed Christ dyed for me, and when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ dyed for sinners; I am a sinner, and therefore Christ dyed for me, and he was reconciled unto us, while we were enemies; For the Lord to be thus reconciled to ungodly, to sinners, to enemies, this was more love indeed than ever I expected: Especially, that the Lord would have been half so gracious to me: This turned all my former sorrows into joy; crying out, what shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits that he hath bestowed upon me: For what was I, or any of my Fathers house, that the Lord should be so merciful unto me?

And I have these testimonies of my real conversion to God. 1. The testimony of his spirit adopting me to be his child, Gal. 3. 4, 5. God sent forth his Son to redeem those that are under the law, that they may receive the adoption of Sons. And because you are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father; wherefore thou art no more a servant but a Son: I was once under the law dead, I am now by Christ redeemed. And I bless God for this precious privilege, that I can call God my Father. 2. Christ hath fulfilled the law, therefore I shall not be condemned by the Law, but justified by Jesus Christ, without the deeds of the Law; there was a time when I was dead in sin, and in ungodliness, being alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel, and a stranger to the

the Covenant of grace, having no hope, and without God in the world: But being made alive by Jesus Christ, I see my sins done away; and do believe that Christ hath borne on his body all my sins, he being bruised for our transgressions, Isa. 53. And the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all, by whose stripes we are healed: So that I do believe that by one offering he hath perfected for ever all those that are sanctified, Heb. 10. And that Christ Jesus is become a full and perfect satisfaction for my sins, and that the Lord is well pleased with, and contented in this satisfaction, Mat. 3. *That is my well-beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.*

3. I am in and through Gods free grace, what I am; not for any thing in me, or that I could do, but as in Titus 4. 5. *We our selves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, serving divers lusts; but when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared towards man, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us: That being justified freely by his grace, we should be made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life: And in another place, 1 Tim. 1. 9. Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace in Christ Jesus, before the world began; Therefore I believe, that God the Father loveth me in Jesus Christ. 1 John 4. 19. We love him because he loved us first, John 14. 14. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, that you should bring forth much fruit. Isa. 43. 25. I, even I am he that blot out all thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy iniquities, and he will have mercy, even because he will have mercy: The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sins, I plainly see it is the Lords doings, and it is marvellous in my eyes. As in Ephes. 2. You who were dead in trespasses and sins, hath*

hath be quickned together with him, by Grace so are saved, and that not of your selves, it is the gift of God. I find as Christ Jesus was a free gift to me, and for me, so was this saving grace of faith a free gift also from the Lord to my Soul, Rom. 3. 24. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus; so that all boasting of the creature is excluded by the law of faith. As by the disobedience of one, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.

4. I believe, that as there was no sin found in Christ, and yet a sinner by imputation, so I being a sinner indeed, shall be made righteous by Gods imputation; For it pleased God to make him become sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

5. I have the seal of the spirit, as Paul saith, The spirit of God beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God, and if children, then Heirs of God, and joynt heirs with Christ in this our freedom.

6. I do believe that God the Father loved me, and elected me for the Son to redeem, and that Jesus Christ loves me, as given of the Father for him to redeem, and manifests it to me: And the Holy Ghost loves me, as elected of the Father, and redeemed by the Son, and doth evidence it in me, which is the earnest of my inheritance, and there is an expression in John 3. last. He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life.

7. I do believe that I have everlasting life already in possession. 1. By the Promise, Fear not little flock, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you a Kingdom. 2. In the first fruits, for what is

Heaven hereafter, but a more full enjoyment of what is begun here? What we receive now, is but a tast of what we shall receive; As 1 John 4. 2. *Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when we shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* 3. I do enjoy it by my head Christ, who hath taken full possession of it already for me: Therefore seeing I am not my own, I am bought with a price, therefore I desire to glorifie God with my Soul and Body, which are the Lords, saying with Mary in Luke 1. *My Soul doth magnifie the Lord, and my Spirit doth rejoyce in God my Saviour, who hath regarded the low estate of his hand-maid.*

8. Though formerly my foundation was built upon the sands, and therefore easily overthrown: Yet now I trust in the Lord I am established by Faith, built upon that Rock, which is the love of God, my Saviour Christ being the corner stone, Isa. 28. 16. *Behold I lay in Zion a stone, a tryed stone, he that believeth shall not make haste.*

9. I wait upon the Will of my Heavenly Father in all his dispensations, for a more full enjoyment of Jesus Christ in my Soul, which I do hunger and thirst after, and I have the promise of my God that I shall be filled, and having tasted, I have found the Lord is gracious, and more to be desired than thousands of Worlds.

10. I believe not upon others words, but as in John 4. 42. as some said to the Woman of Samaria. *Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him our selves, and know that this is indeed the Christ the Saviour of the World.*

11. As David saith, *I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord, and I believe, therefore have I spoken, for I was greatly afflicted.*

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As the Apostle saith, *ye are complete in Christ*, therefore I reckon my self in him.

12. The Lord having cleared it to me, that I am a believer, I am confident that Christ Jesus did pray to his Father for me, in the 17. of *John*, saying, *I pray not for these only, but for them that shall believe through their word, that they may be one, even as we are one*, therefore thou art my God, and I will praise thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.

Thus in some measure I have weakly hinted out a reason of the hope that is in me, trusting in my God, that as he hath taken away the guilt of sin out of my conscience, so in his due time he will take away all sin from my conversation; as he hath given me a pardon for sin, so he will over-power all my corruptions, that I may live more to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made me accepted in the Beloved, and that I shall become (over sin, Satan, self, and all things opposite to grace) more than a Conqueror through him that hath loved me, and washed me from my sins in his blood; for to him are all things possible, and he is the wise Master-Builder, who will not only begin, but will go on to accomplish his own work. D. R.

XXVIII. *Experiences of A. O.*

I Have undergone sad troubles of spirit for my sins, which I have had a great fight and sense of and shed many tears for, and desire to be truly sorry for them, and hate them, and to have no more communion with them.

About two years I lay under very great temptations, and was ready to despair, and for several nights could not take any rest in my bed; but was very weak with weeping, and much grieved for my evil thoughts, yet the Lord drew forth my

heart to call upon him, and hope in him for mercy. But I had many sore conflicts, inasmuch that I could not lye in the chamber alone; I made what use I could of opportunities to desire comfort from such godly Christians as I could meet withal to counsel me in the ways of God, and I laboured to hearken to them, but found my heart very dull and heavy for a time, untill about three years since, I began to find comfort from some Sermons that I heard, and books that I read, and some thoughts that the Lord settled upon my heart by his spirit, hoping that there was mercy for me. And I did believe that I had all the prayers of all the Saints in the world put up to the Throne of grace for me, and that my Saviour had satisfied for my sins, and through him God was reconciled to me, and in particular I found comfort from these and some other promises, John 16. 35. *Jesús said unto them, I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me, shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst.* Verse 37. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out,* John 14. 1. *Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me,* Jerem. 31. 33. *But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days saith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their Hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* And I do find in my heart a testimony of my believing, & that I do love God, wrought in me by his blessed Spirit, by these particulars.

1. I love God, not through slavish fear, but for his name and glory, so that I can leave all for him, and nothing is so dear and precious unto me, as the love of God; and nothing so great a joy to me, as that Christ who dyed for me, hath not left me.
2. I find such comfort from the Lord, that he by  
his

his Spirit revives my drooping heart, and fills my empty Soul, and when my poor Spirit is even fainting away, I find comfort from his glorious power and presence. 3. When I cannot come to Ordinances it is a grief to me, and when I am in duty it is a grief to me that I am so dull and find no more enlargement; yet my affections are groaning after the Lord Jesus Christ in Duties, and I have a great longing to receive more of Christ. And I find more comfort when my heart is enlarged in duty, than in any other thing in the World, and I know that all my comfort is from Jesus Christ. 4. What I desire to enjoy, I seek to enjoy it in God through peace of conscience, that it may be to the comfort of my faith, for God is pure, and it is a great grief to me that I can serve my God no better. 5. I do not fear death, for my faith is so settled in God, that I long to be with my Saviour, when he shall be pleased to call me to him; Christ hath dyed for me, to take away the fear of the second death. A. O.

XXIX. *Experiences of M. W.*

I Have from my child-hood desired to serve the Lord, and to make his Commandments my rule to walk by; and I thought once that I could have said with the young man in the Gospel, *All these have I kept from my youth.* But it pleased the Lord to visit me with a grievous sickness, even unto death; and then my heart told me that I was a great sinner, and my conscience accused me, that I had loved the world more than I had loved Jesus Christ. Then I was afflicted in my spirit with fear, because I could not believe that Jesus Christ had dyed for me. I besought the Lord by earnest prayer, that he would be pleased to spare me, for I found myself to be very unfit for death. I made Promises to the Lord, that if he did please to spare

me, I would lead a new life, and did resolve to walk more close to my God. The Lord was pleased, in mercy, to hear my Prayer, and grant this request, and spare me a while longer to serve him in the land of the living.

But notwithstanding my promises, and the great deliverance the Lord had wrought for me in keeping me back from Hell, and the Grave, I had soon forgotten all. I began to love the world again, and lived as vainly as before. But the Lord smote my conscience, and sorely troubled my spirit for this backsliding, putting me in mind of the promises I had made to him in my sickness. With great bitterness of heart and grief of Soul, I mourned for my failings, and did again resolve, for the time to come to keep more close to God, and set a watch over my heart. But the more I looked into my heart, the more vile I saw myself to be, and was greatly troubled that I had so often played the hypocrite with my God. I again besought the Lord by prayer, that he would be pleased, for Jesus Christ his sake to forgive all my sins, and backslidings, which I then was grieved for, with loathing, more than ever before.

My conscience was so wounded, and my Soul cast down in so great a conflict, that my spirits were almost dried up, and my heart began to grow weary and faint with crying and groaning after my Saviour. Yet the Lord was pleased to humble me still more and more, and to try me further, as gold is tryed in the fire. And my afflictions were doubled upon me by Satans malice, who tempted me with evil thoughts, which was grievous to my Soul. When I had prayed (with a troubled spirit as well as I could) the Devil put thoughts into my mind, quite contrary to the frame of a praying spirit. When I had read the word of God, he



he tempted me with doubts and questions, touching some things therein, whether it was truth or not. And Satan followed his temptations so close upon me, that as soon as the Lord had inabled me to repulse one temptation, the Devil assaulted me with another, so that I had scarce time to fetch my breath, one temptation followed so close upon another.

Being troubled much in my spirit in this condition, I was tempted to discontent, that the Lord had not taken away these Temptations from me, and in anger fell into some great passions, even near unto desperation. And I was sorely buffeted by the Devil, in this my lowest extremity, who assaulted me with fresh temptations of blasphemous thoughts touching God, so that when in the bitterness of my Soul I was seeking after Jesus Christ, and had named God, he would put into my mind the objects of the brute Creatures, and even whilst I was pouring out my Soul to the Creator, and was pleading a promise, he brought a curse to my thoughts. Thus was I repulled in all duties by Satans terrifying my Soul to perswade me, that it was in vain for me to seek for Salvation, because I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost ( which God by his word hath declared shall never be forgiven neither in this World, nor in the World to come ) because I was discontented that the Lord after all my addresses to him had not delivered me from all my troubles. But the Lord gave me strength to resist Satan, and say in the bitterness of my Soul to my God, far be it from me O Lord, to be offended with thee. And the Lord wrought this resolution in my Soul, that I did protest before the Lord, that although I should see nothing but Hell before me, yet I would trust in him, and stay my self upon my God, un-  
til

he pleased to send me deliverance. I made my case known to a dear friend, who gave me some comfort; he told me, that the sin against the Holy Ghost, was to sin wilfully, by perpetual despite against God: I found a clear testimony in my conscience, that I was so far from despising the Spirit of grace, that I had not sinned willingly against God, for I found it to be an affliction to me to be tempted with evil thoughts touching the Lord, tho' I consented not to them; and I found my Soul grieved that I could not be freed from them. And then with abundance of tears, by often prayers and supplications to the Throne of Grace, I poured forth my sinful Soul at the foot-stool of Gods mercy, exalting free grace, and pleading the unspeakable riches of the mercies of God, that would appear in the conversion of such a sinner as I had been. Methoughts it seemed to exalt Gods mercy, and to be one of the greatest manifestations of free grace in the world, to be to the great glory of the Lord, and unspeakable comfort of my poor Soul, if he would be pleased to bring me to himself.

Now when, by the Divine power of God, my heart was thus resolved to trust in him and to wait upon him, then the Lord was pleased to shew me to my comfort, the example of Jesus Christ, who had no sin in himself, yet he was tempted of the Devil. And likewise of *Paul*, how Satan sent forth a messenger to buffet him, who then prayed unto God, and the Lord said, *my grace is sufficient for thee*, my power is made known in thy weakness. Then I began to be comforted and to think if Christ himself was tempted, if the children of God who had been eminent examples, had lain under temptations, and the Lord according to his promises had strengthened and delivered them, there

there was hope for me. And the Lord wrought faith in my heart to believe, that he would strengthen me, and keep me that I should not perish for ever.

And I have since found great consolation in many promises, which the Lord hath revealed in his Word, which I have pleaded before him, some of which follow. *Isaiah 50. 10. Who is among you, that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his Servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.* I applyed this promise thus, I had walked in darkness and saw no light, but God had wrought in my heart to fear him, and a willingness to obey my Saviour, and a resolution to trust in the name of the Lord, therefore I knew it was not in vain to stay my self upon my God. And *Matth. 12. 20. (It is said by Christ) A bruised reed shall be not break, and smoking flax shall be not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.* The Lord having broken and bruised me in the sense of sin, and drawn forth my heart to rely upon him, I believed that he would in the end give me victory through Christ, and *Isa. 40. 29. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.* This promise I laid hold on, because Christ saith, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavily laden, and I will give you rest, Mat. 11. 28.* When I had refreshed my spirit by applying these and some other Promises to my own Soul, by faith in the Lord Jesus, I found an effect of my faith by that love to God, which by his holy Spirit he had wrought in my Soul, which appeareth by these particular Evidences.

1. I am grieved that I have been so unbelieving towards God, and so impatient in my afflictions.
2. I am troubled to think that whilst I live here

in

in this mortal flesh, I cannot be quite freed from sin; but must live to offend so good a God, who hath wrought so great a deliverance for me. 3. I bless the Lord, I can (through Divine goodness from the testimony of the blessed Spirit) say with comfort the Lord is my God, whereby I can cry, *Abba Father*. 4. I can I hope willingly deny myself in all things, and should the Lord call me to it take up the Cross of my Saviour Jesus to follow him, and bless God in all dispensations whatsoever. 5. I find a total desire, and willingness in my heart to surrender my self to be led by Gods blessed Spirit, in all holiness and piety, with perseverance, that I may live all my days to the glory of my God. 6. My affections are more firmly and really knit to God than to any thing, so that I can part with any thing for God; and I value my interest in God above all things, and I find more joy in him than in all things. 7. I am not now afraid to dye, should God call me, that I may go to be with my Saviour for ever. 8. I desire to be in love and charity with all men, but in an especial manner I do love the godly, because in appearance they are the children of God, and I desire to feed up on Christ by faith in his Ordinances. *M.W.*

XXX. *Experiences of H. C.*

**A**T the beginning of the Civil Wars, I as well as others was much frightened; and when it was said that such a day the City should be destroyed, I was amazed; I had been a hearer a great while of very eminent Ministers in the City of London, yet profited very little by what I heard. For if they preached the mercies of God, I feared they did not belong to me, because I could not find those qualifications in me which I thought I ought to have, if I expected to receive mercy. I could rejoyce in hearing of the promises, but could not

not lay hold on them as belonging to me; but still I went to hear though with much trouble of mind. That day wherein it was said, the City should be destroyed, I began to call my self to account, what would become of my Soul, if it should be so: I was almost amazed, but did much desire of God that he would give me faith, and with the Publican I said, *Lord I believe, help my unbelief*; I then resolved with my self, well, I will cast my Soul into the arms of God, *If I perish, I perish*. And through belief in him, I was quieted in my spirit at that time: But my sense of peace was soon veiled. And I was afterward sore afflicted with the sight of my sin, and was fully perswaded that I was an Hypocrite, and that all that I did was but for fear of Hell, then durst I not be any where alone, for fear of the sight of the Devil, and if I had been at prayer by my self, I durst not open my eyes.

Thus was I perplexed with fear and perswaded my self I should perish; my condition was very bitter to me, and I did much labour for a resting place for my Soul. And being one day at a Funeral, the Minister that preached the Sermon, shewed the sufficiency of God, and the insufficiency of man, and that all good came from God. He said, that it was as possible for that dead man to put life into himself, as for any man to gain the least drop of grace of himself, *for Faith is the gift of God*. Then I began to consider with my self, and to take notice of the promises of God; and I would write them to keep them about me: I then being a Hearer at St. M. the Minister was much upon the affairs of the times, and I was much troubled about what I heard, for I found not my Soul satisfied with that matter. When I came home, I found that my Soul was not able to live with that food;

food : and it pleased the Lord to direct me to hear Mr. Symphon at *All-hallows Toames Street* and he was setting forth the free grace of God to poor sinners.

And then I began to reason with my self, that surely in putting all mercy from me, I did dishonour God, for he inviteth all to believe his promises. And I read that he saith, *As I live I desire not the death of a sinner.* And Christ saith, *he came to save sinners,* and that *the whole need not a Physician, but those that are sick :* And God hath promised, *not to break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax ;* and Christ dyed for the ungodly, and God is no respecter of persons. And Christ promisseth, *That whosoever comes unto him, he will in no wise cast off.* When I had considered these and other promises ; And that place where it is said, *that without Faith it is impossible to please God,* then I was earnest with God, that he would give me faith and sincerity of Heart, And that place did much refresh me, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* Yet again after all this, the sense of mine own unworthiness did much trouble me, and I was greatly grieved that I was so cumbered in the world, and began to doubt, saying, sure I have not chosen the better part.

For sometimes I should rejoyce, and praise God being much satisfied from those places of Scripture, which say, *He hath laid our iniquities on him,* and *he hath laid help on him that is mighty.* And in another place, *Ye are saved by grace, not of your selves, it is the gift of God :* And, *We have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the Righteous.* And *he was made sin for us that knew no sin,* that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. And, *behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the World.* But in a short time I should lose all my sense of comfort, and then I had sad thoughts,

musing

musing what God would do with me. In the depth of these conflicts, at last that place refreshed me, where God saith, *I the Lord change not, therefore ye Sins of Jacob are not consumed.* Though before I was not satisfied that my faith was true, but doubted that surely I had presumed upon false grounds, and was much perplexed, yet now it pleased God in the midst of my distress, to bring to my mind these words, *The Spirit saith come, and the Bride saith come, and every one that will come, drink of the water of life freely.* I said, of myself I cannot come: But I prayed, *Lord draw me, and I shall run after thee.* And this word was cast into my Soul by the Lord, *My grace is sufficient for thee, only do thou believe.* And God hath now wrought faith in me, and by the testimony of his Spirit hath sealed his love in Christ to me, working in my heart so to love him, that I have cast myself wholly upon him. *H.C.*

-XXXI. *Experiences of T. R. Mariner.*

**A**T the Age of two and twenty being in the *Streights*, I was taken by the merciless *Turks*, but the power of the Lord delivered me out of captivity by a miraculous way unexpected; The Lord giving me grace to call on him, gave me a gracious answer. That *he would never leave me, nor forsake me.*

In the War with *France*, on the Coast of *Guinea* I was taken by a *French* Man of War, and was greatly afflicted, for want of food and raiment, and other hardships which they laid on me, to have turned to their *Catholick* Religion, yet the Lord still promised me, that he would give me a deliverance out of their merciless hands; who made good his promise to me in a short time, blessed be his holy name. After this I went a Voyage to *Brazil*, and our Ship being laden, we did intend for *Portugal*,

*Portugal*, but they detained us a whole year, so that our Ship was all eaten with worms, and we were fain to keep pumping for nine months, but the longer the worse, for in our passage homeward we could not tell which death to chuse, either to starve, or to be drowned, for our Victuals was so small, that for one year and more we had no bread in our Ship, but eat the roots of Trees, made into a substance like Oatmeal, and for Beef, one ounce for a man a day which stunk so that none could have eat it but men in our case; for Drink, we were glad of a pint of water a day during the time of our passage, which was seventeen weeks; but in this passage we saw the wonderful works of God, for he sent us for three weeks in seasonable times, fish called Dolphins, sometimes two or three in a day; And as we grew within three hundred Leagues of the Coast of *Portugal*, and our Provision near spent, only three or four days left, and all our men sick, and weak, and almost starved, it pleased God of his great mercy to send us a Ship of *Flushing*, a Man of War, who proved to us as *Joseph*, to the children of *Israel*, for they brought us Victuals which saved our lives, and after they had taken our Ship, they were fain to put on board forty men to keep her from sinking, for it pleased God that the next day after we had a violent Storm, and a great Sea broke upon her, so that we thought she would never have recovered her self again, for our goods did shut all to one side, and so she was fain to go untill she came to *Flushing*, but we poor creatures were in great peril and danger of our Lives, and yet the Lord comforted me by his Promise, That he would bring me to shore, and would deliver my life from death, and my eyes from tears; and he hath done graciously with me above my deserts, and inabled me



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me above my strength, and delivered me above my hope, therefore will I praise him without measure, and magnifie his name without end.

Three years after this being on the Coast of *Ireland*, it pleased the Lord to raise a violent Storm, and in the morning by the dawning of the day, we were so near the Shore, that to mans judgment there was nothing but death approaching, for we knew no place of that Land by reason of the Fogg, and Rain that we had all the day, and knew not where to go, but as the Lord, who is the Pilot of Pilots did carry us, untill four a clock at Night, which in *December* is dark, and then we came to a great high head-land, and a little without that lay a great sand, so that we could not go any other way but betwixt them; being then past all hopes of life, we forced her through the Sea, so that it brake over our heads, insomuch that we could not tell whether we were in the Sea or the Bark, but by our feet and hands, for we could not see for the violence of the water, only he that was at the Helm: And yet in the space of a quarter of an hour we were in a safe place, newly taken out of the jaws of death. So that I of all men have great cause to be always rendring thanks to my God, for his continual and most sweet favours unto me, sinful, wretched, and empty man, void of all spiritual goodness.

Furthermore, I being after this in a Ship of 300 Tuns lying on the Coast of *Virginia*, wind-bound the space of seven weeks, it pleased God to visit our people with the Pestilential Feaver, and the Callenture, which is a violent Feaver, or Madness at first, and we had in our Ship two hundred thirty five Souls at that time, and it was the will and pleasure of God that we had a hundred of them sink at one time, so that we had but few to look  
to

to the sick, and were in great want of Provisions, yet we knew not whether to go; but it pleased God to raise a great Storm, so that a great Sea brake into our main Sail, and we had two foot water between Decks; and our poor sick people cryed out they were drowned, but within an hour after, by the mercy of God, we had fair weather, and fair wind, and within three or four days God set us safe on Land, to our great joy and comfort, that before were almost past hopes, so that he caused us to say with the Prophet *David*, *It was good for me that I was afflicted.* And yet have another choice mercy to make known of what God hath done for me, for he hath now called me out of the world, but not out of the Land of the living; he hath also opened my eyes, and made clear my understanding with *Mary*, to chuse the better part; and whatsoever the World, or Satan can cast upon me, it shall all turn to my good; for I *know* that my Redeemer liveth, and him my Soul desires to bless and praise, which I trust I shall do till my change cometh, as God shall inable me, and the Lord strengthen my faith.

XXXII. *Experiences of T. G.*

**I**T hath pleased the Lord God of his own free mercy and love in Jesus Christ to prevent and keep me ever since I was born from many thousand dangers, and yet I like an unruly Creature, have kicked at his Fatherly protection, and run into many gross and vile sins. The first gross one was, many kinds of unlawful gaming, which held me as a bond-slave near thirty years, to the great endangering both of my Body and Soul, but yet it pleased the Lord to look graciously upon me, and to give me afterwards an hatred against this vice, and withal, he put into my mind a resolution, which I confirmed with a vow, as followeth: 'That as

I loved God and his Word, or my own Soul, I would never play at any game for money so long as I lived. The Lord was pleased to accept of my good will; and blessed me and mine in my lawfull calling many years, untill at the last that old Serpent the Devil, envying my happy proceedings in this Reformation, he drew me into many other sins, which had almost brought me to as bad an end as the first. But the Lord out of the lowest Extremities gives in remedies to his Children, and he gave me an hatred against them also, and a Resolution, *Never to commit them any more.*

Yet about two or three years after, that old enemy of mankind, Satan, that roaring Lion seeking whom he may devour, came again with turnings to destroy me, perswading me, that to drink with my Neighbours, was acceptable to God (which may be used without excess) but I gave will the full reins, which brought me back again to my former courses, withal annexing wrath and anger to my House and Family, perswading me that I must rule in my house, which had brought me besides my self, had not God helped me, who never fails those whom he loves, and that put their trust in him: For presently upon this extremity, he sent this remedy. 1. A sight of my sins: 2. A grief and sorrow for them: 3. A resolution to leave them: And 4. The Lord carryed me through a way to leave them, which was thus.

I began to call to mind what was the greatest thing I loved in this World, and in the World to come, besides those that I named before, which I set opposite to these two monsters: Then I vowed before the Lord, desiring his assistance, 'That as I loved the Holy Ghost the comforter, or ever looked to have comfort from the blessed communion of the body and blood of Christ Jesus to cleanse

cleanse my sins, so if I did remember or was in  
 perfect sense, I would never drink above two rea-  
 sonable glasses, or cups of Wine, or four cups of  
 Beer in any one place, or at any one time, *with-*  
*out any Equivocation,* And that at any time when I  
 came into the doors of my house, if there were  
 any controversie in my Family, that then I  
 would with gentle perswasions do my best indea-  
 vour to end it; And this with Gods help I  
 would perform. And I prayed, ' O Lord my God,  
 bless my hand and my heart to perform thy will,  
 that when any temptation to gaming or drunken-  
 ness, or lust shall assault me, either by thought  
 or any other means, that then presently I may  
 fly unto thee in the name of Christ Jesus my Sa-  
 viour. And I do still fly unto God, confessing  
 and sorrowing for my sins, desiring the Lord to  
 help and assist me to perform and keep all these,  
 and in all things to serve God as long as I live. I  
 cannot be so humbled for my sins as I desire, yet  
 have I had much trouble for sin, and have shed tears  
 many a time, and I have been much troubled that  
 my heart cannot be broken enough; yet I have had  
 many crosses, but I know it is the hand of God,  
 and I desire to lye low before him.

When God first discovered my sins to me, I was  
 was much terrified. But I have found much com-  
 fort in that glorious promise, which God made  
 when Adam had sinned, that *The seed of the Woman*  
*should break the Serpents head,* Gen. 3. And also  
 that sweet Promise declared by the Lord Jesus, *Come*  
*unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I*  
*will give you rest,* Matth. 11. 28. And Peter decla-  
 reth saying, *Repent and be converted, that your sins*  
*may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall*  
*come from the presence of the Lord.* I have pleaded  
 these and several other promises with God, and  
 have

have by faith trusted in God, who bids us cast our care on him, and he will care for us, 1 Pet. 5. 7. And I do believe in God, and cast my self upon him, knowing all the Promises to be yea, and Amen in Christ. And I have these effects of Gods gracious spirit, working Regeneration in my Soul.

1. In that the Lord (blessed be his holy name) hath so settled my heart on himself, that I could leave friends, relations, and all things for God.
2. I find in my heart a real affection and love strongly carryed out to all the children of God, and I love to do good to the people of God.
3. I take much delight to hear the word of God preached, and to partake of duties with the people of God & to have communion with God in private duties.
4. I am troubled when my heart is cold in duty, but much comforted, when my heart is enlarged towards God.
5. I believe that God will save me through Christ for ever. T. G.

XXXIII. *Experiences of M. H.*

**I**N my youthful age it pleased God to give me an heart to take delight to hear the Word preached at many places, but especially at St. Antholins at the morning Lectures, and this I did often for some time, untill Satan stirred up many Instruments to call me Puritan with many other reproachful tearms, that made me ashamed to go in publick; but like *Nicodemus* by stealth, as it were, in the dark: But it pleased the Lord to convince me of Satans wiles, that he was a deceiver from the first, and that in hearing the word Preached, those that would be Souldiers in Christs School, must not be daunted for every foyl; and ' If I did look for Salvation by Jesus Christ, I must manfully fight under the Banner of Christ, and hold out to the end; if I would be saved. From the consideration hereof, God was pleased to put courage into my

my heart, to hold on in the ways of God, and in professing the Gospel, which I did, though with abundance of weakness and difficulties; and thus I did continually go on though darkly, until it pleased God to break forth in his most glorious light; for by special providence I was brought to see an utter ruine to my Soul without a Christ; and tho' I had heard much of Christ by the outward ear, yet had I no experimental knowledge of him, till the word of Christ shewed me, that my condition was such as *Paul* speaks of to the *Ephesians*, that *I was dead in trespasses and sins, and except I was quickened by the Spirit, and by Faith did bath my Soul in the blood of Christ, I was an undone creature, notwithstanding all my long hearing the word preached.*

Having then weighed many circumstances, and had conference with many of the people of God, both Preachers and others, I was very much strengthened in faith, and had an assurance of the love of God in Christ Jesus, whereby I did find much comfort to my Soul; and since hearing some able Ministers of the Gospel hold forth most precious truths, I found much comfort: And more particularly *Mr. Bridges of Tarmouth*, opening that comfortable Scripture, *Psal. 41. 11. Why art thou cast down O my Soul, why art thou disquieted within me? trust in God, &c.* His Doctrine was, 'That a  
' godly man had no just cause to be discouraged,  
' whatsoever his condition was; either the sence  
' of sin, or the temptations of Satan, or trouble, or  
' afflictions; that a man had cause to be humbled for  
' the least sin, but not to be discouraged at the  
' greatest, from trusting in God, but to rely upon  
' the Lord by Faith in Christ, whatsoever his discouragements were; which hath since caused me  
to walk in a thankful posture towards God for his  
unspeakable

unspeakable mercy; and it is my great grief, that I can be no more thankful, seeing I have received so much mercy from God, whom I do daily offend; which hath made me with Paul to cry out, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? But that the next words produce comfort, blessed be God through Jesus Christ.

Yet after this, it pleased God, to suffer me to fall into a sinful condition, by being too confident in my own strength, which fall cost me abundance of tears, sighs and sobbings of heart, even as David said, *of the breaking and drying of my bones*; It made me walk sadly for many months together, & even to despair of any help. And seeing I had brought so much dishonour to God, and scandal to the Gospel, and reproach to the Professors thereof, this did much press my soul; 'Considering what a Professor, 'I was before, in standing for the glory of God, and 'opposing all gainsayers, and for me to fall; Oh! 'this did make such gashes in my soul, that the 'consideration thereof, caused me to walk sadly, and 'sorrowfully, and with so much shame that I could 'not indure to go in the streets, *But that urgent 'necessity forced me to go out for comfort.*

Then it pleased God by special providence to call me under Dr. *Homes* his Ministry, and he treated on that subject concerning backsliding, out of *Jer. 14 v. 7.* O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, yet do thou it for thy name sake, for our backslidings are many, &c. which Sermon was by the working of the Spirit of God effectual unto me, for I was almost under despair before, but the Lord was pleased to give me much comfort from this Doctrine.

That Saints may be guilty of many backslidings 'yet they should not despair, for that was a greater sin. The Doctor made this Use, That if 'Saints might break their peace, wicked and unre-

generate men might break their necks. A second  
 use was, that a Saint should beware of backsliding,  
 and make all speed to go to Jesus Christ for more  
 strength to keep and uphold him for the future  
 This did give me some comfort, and caused me  
 to set upon the work of seeking to Jesus Christ  
 more earnestly, because Christ told *Paul*, that *his*  
*grace was sufficient for him*; I had rested in that  
 little *mustard-seed-faith* I had before, but now it did  
 begin to spring and blossom, to the praise and glo-  
 ry of Jesus Christ, that he should as it were snatch  
 me as a Brand out of those burnings of Hell, and  
 establish my poor soul by his free grace, to see all  
 my iniquities laid to the charge of Christ, as *Isa. 53.*  
*v. 9. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned*  
*every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on*  
*him the iniquities of us all.* Which Scripture being  
 opened by a worthymember of that Church Mr.  
 F. it did much strengthen my Faith in the Appli-  
 cation, when I came to consider, First, That  
 it was iniquity that the Lord Jehovah laid on  
 Christ. Secondly, That it was my iniquity  
 that was thus laid on him. Thirdly, that it was  
 the Lord himself that did lay it on him. And  
 Fourthly, That the Lord had done it already, it  
 was not now to do. All these points did much  
 comfort me, seeing they were back'd by Scripture,  
 and such a caution given by the Apostle *Paul*, *Heb. 3.*  
*12. saying, Take heed lest there be found in you an evil*  
*heart of unbelief, &c.* Which is a great sin and plague  
 to any poor Soul, this wrought much with me but  
 then applying several other Scriptures, to the ever-  
 lasting praise of Jehovah, and to Jesus Christ my  
 Saviour, this Scripture was produced in *Psal. 68. 16.*  
 compared with the Apostles words, speaking of  
 Christ, *Thou hast ascended up on high, and led capti-*  
*vity captive, and received gifts for men, even rebellious*  
*ones*



ones; that the Lord God may dwell amongst them! And that of Ezek. 16. 7, 8, 9, 10. A precious Scripture for troubled souls, to be meditated on for comfort:  
 ' That a man being in his filth and guilt, and all over  
 ' with blood, nay, when no eye would pity him, that  
 ' then was a time of love to his soul; Oh! mercy and free grace indeed! Then again, considering  
*The new Covenant, to open blind eyes, and to bring prisoners out of prison, to the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God, and his proclamation, Isa. 55. He every one that thirsteth come: and in that of Joh. 6. v 37. him that cometh to Christ, he hath promised in no wise to cast out. Though thy sins be as Crimson and Scarlet, yet, of such a deep dye as that with Paul, I may say, to be chief of sinners, yet it pleased God to give me so refreshment from the same Scripture.*

About two years since, Providence cast my Lot at Westminster, where I heard Mr. W. and having observed many honest people, at hearing of the Word, I then sought to the Lord by earnest prayer, so to direct me by his blessed Spirit, that my only aims might be for his glory, the good of others, and with comfort to my own soul: It pleased the Lord to direct my heart (notwithstanding all opposition of Satan, and the persuasion of some others) to resolve and to break through all opposition and difficulties and to joyn in the worship of the Lord God of our Fathers, and to walk in his ways, according to the strictest rule of the Gospel of Jesus Christ held forth in his Word. *M. H.*

XXXIV. EXPERIENCES of L. P.

**A**Bout twenty years since I being then with Child, was much troubled at some thoughts, which God put into my mind, touching my conversation; which lay so sore and heavy upon me, that I could not tell what to do; Because I saw, though I endeavoured as much as I could, to do my duty to

my God. yet I was not able to live as I should; and then I began to know what the worm of conscience meant, I feeling what until then I was ignorant of: and the blackness of my spirit was such, with the burden of my troubled and afflicted soul, that I could not at that time take comfort in any thing, and had I not been with child, &c. affected with natural inclination to the Babe in my womb, I had been in danger (had not God prevented me) to have destroyed my self, for I had some temptations that way; but my God strengthened me: yet before I was brought to bed, I found peace and comfort, and through grace had such settlement in my spirit, that I could with joy night and day call upon my God believingly: but before I attained to this, I had many sore conflicts, until after some considerations that the Lord had put into my mind; as first, touching the child that I went with, because God hath said, *The just and innocent slay them not*; and then considering the innocency of the child, it became a means to stay my hand from laying violence upon my self.

Yet for a time I was much troubled in spirit, till God gave me peace from these, and other Scripture-promises, where the Lord saith, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, & thou shalt glorify me*, Psal. 40. 15. *Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law, but under grace*, Rom. 6. 14. Now the testimonies of my conversion, and true believing, in which I hope I have a seal of my Interest in the Lord Jesus are these: 1. My love to God, which is real, sincere, and hearty, desiring him above any thing else whatsoever. 2. My relying upon Jesus Christ, having nothing of my own to rest upon, I fly to him, and rest on him for all, as my alone Saviour and Redeemer. 3. I delight to read the holy Word of God, and to hear

hear, or otherwise to partake thereof, in which I find much comfort. 4. The comfort which I find by enlargement of my soul, when God comes in under the means in dutys, and the loathsomness I have to be deprived of the Ordinances. 5. The Peace I find with my God in my soul, which is sweet, though not without much heaviness of spirit for my failings, I do not live without waives and changes in my Spiritual life, and faith towards the Lord, for sometimes I trust God with all, and at other times I meet with some doubtings, yet blessed be God I find them more and more, asswaged, and my communion with Christ every day more sweet and full. 6. I doubt not but the Lord Jesus Christ my Redeemer will so support me, through his Grace, that what ever my condition hath been, or shall be here, I shall not fail of salvation through Christ in heaven for ever. L. P.

XXXV. *Experiences of Ph.P.*

I Have been troubled at the thoughts of my corruptions, and wretched condition. I have formerly had some doubtings touchings the Scriptures, whether they were truth or not, but have been since troubled, that I made those foolish doubtings to question Gods word, and was so wounded in my Conscience for my sin therein, that I feared I should be damned for it: because I thought it was a sin that God would not pardon. I had also strange thoughts about the sinful wayes of ungodly people, and considering how loosely people live, I and temptations to perswade me, that surely there was some easier way to Heaven then the Scriptures had laid down, or then I had learnt. But for these evil thoughts of mine, I have been so afflicted in my spirit that I thought I was a damned wretch. I have been tempted by these blasphemous thoughts against the Lord, which have so afflicted me; that sometimes I feared the Devil would fetch me away, and carry me

to Hell; and I have thought sometimes, that surely God could not in justice pardon such sinnes as I have committed. I have also been tempted to make away my self, but the Lord God put me in mind to consider, that it would not give me ease or comfort, but be the way to enter into endless miseries.

And thus I lay afflicted with a most sad & trouble some spirit for about a year, yet ( though with little hope from my present sence ) I had desires that God would save me, and some groanings I had after him. And in his time which is best, I began to find enlargement of heart from God, and a great longing for Christ, which encreased through the working of his glorious power, so that ( me thought ) I could have been content to have gone through all the miseries in the World to have enjoyed him. And in my sleep I dreamed that I saw my Saviour lying in a Grave, and after again, I saw him risen from death; when I awaked, and had some thoughts about my dream, I found comfort in my soul, and begun more sweetly to hope, that Christ Jesus dyed for my sins, and is risen again for my justification? but the Devil who goes about like a roaring Lyon did still tempt me, so that I was again ready to despair for my former evil thoughts, and I was afraid that Satan would have me; and I doubted that God had no part in me; which caused me to weep much, and I was exceedingly troubled, and sometimes thought, that verily I heard the Devil coming in a Whirlwind for me, and so terrified was my conscience that from the thoughts of the wrath which I feared, I could have wished my self a Beast, a Dog, or any thing, because their misery would have an end.

But after many comfortable discourses with friends, and reading some godly books that came to my hands, the Lord God in time delivered me from

from those temptations, and hath since comforted me with these Promises, to the great joy of my heart, though some times I have not been without some doubtings. The Lord hath said, *Be content with such things as ye have,* for he hath said, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, so that I may boldly say, the Lord is my helper,* Heb. 13. 5, 6. The Lord saith, *sin shall not have dominion over you,* Rom. 6. 14. This hath often given me much comfort, and kept up my soul when I have been ready to despair: And Christ saith, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth,* John 14. 16, 17.

And I have this testimony of my interest in Christ, by faith wrought by his blessed Spirit in me. 1. I see such a frailty in my flesh, that except the Lord send his holy Spirit to inable me, I cannot do any thing of my duty to God of my self: it is the Spirit of the Lord, and not any thing in me, that is the foundation of my comfort. 2. I have had many times (if my heart deceive me not) clear testimonies and evidences that I love God more than any thing else, and desire him above all. 3. I desire much to hear the Word, and am troubled that sometimes it doth not so pierce into my heart, as I desire. 4. I have sometimes such sweet comforts and enlargements in my soul, that I find much peace with God thereby, which I prize above all things in the world. 5. I desire to serve the Lord in all things and am troubled when any thing obstructs those desires. 6. I hope for salvation and true blessedness from Jesus Christ my Redeemer, and from him alone.

S. P.

## XXXVI. Experiences of D. C.

I Have had great Conflicts of Soul for my sins, and against sin, and have shed many tears by Night and by day; I have been much troubled at the consideration of such things, as have been at any time a clog to hinder me from enjoying spiritual Communion with God, which I have desired. It is the greatest grief I have ever had, that I have offended so good a God; and indeed my sins have been a very great trouble to me, and especially, in that God hath given me a measure of knowledge, and I have not walked up to it, to live according to the light I have received. But I have found comfort in God's Promises: Christ saith, *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*, John chap. 6. verse 37. *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate*, saith the Lord, *and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters*, saith the Lord Almighty. The Lord will receive us if we repent and believe; and Christ calls, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, Matth. 11. 28. And as a testimony of my Regeneration, I have these Experiences, whereby to give account of the hope that is in me. 1. That all my desires are chiefly to seek God in Christ. 2. I find much comfort in duties, to joyn in Ordinances, and to partake of the things of God. 3. I find my heart really at peace with all the World. 4. I believe that the Lord God is at peace with me, and will save me for ever through Jesus Christ. D. C.

*Experiences of Mrs. Katherine Clark.*

**H**AVING met with the Experiences of this Religious and worthy Gentlewoman in the account of her Life, published by her pious Husband Mr. Samuel Clark, formerly Minister of St. Bennet Fink London; which were found written in her own hand after her death; and they being so very pertinent to the others aforementioned, I thought it might be very useful to insert them, without any alteration, in her own words.

When I was but young, my Father being at Prayer in his Family, I many times found such sweetness, and was so affected therewith, that I could not but wish that my heart might be enclosed in such a frame; but Childhood, and the Vanities thereof soon cooled these heavenly sparks; but my Father (who was a Minister) caused us to write Sermons, and to repeat the same: As also to learn Mr. Perkins Catechism, which I oft repeated to my self when I was alone; and therein I especially took notice of those places wherein he had set down the signs and marks of a strong and weak Faith; being convinced in my Conscience that without Faith I could not be saved; and that every Faith would not serve to bring me to Heaven: Hereupon I fell to examination of my self, and though I could not find the marks of a strong, yet through God's Mercy, I found the marks of a true, tho' but weak Faith, which was some comfort and support to me. And that God which began this good work in me, was pleased to quicken and stir me up to diligent use of such means, as himself had ordained and appointed for the increase thereof, in hearing of the Word, Preaching, private Duties, &c.

But when I was about seventeen years old, my dear Parents sent me to wait upon a young Gentleman

man in Northamptonshire, the only Daughter of Sir W. W. At which time being sent so far from my dear and dear Relations, and meeting with some other discouragements in the Family, thro' want of the Means of Grace, which I formerly enjoyed, I grew very melancholy. I began also to have great workings of Conscience in me, and Satan, the deadly Enemy to the health and welfare of our Souls, who, *like a roaring Lion, walks about continually seeking whom he may devour*, took this advantage, thro' my ignorance of his Devices, to raise up fears, doubts, and terrors of Conscience in me, by reason of my manifold sins, and for walking so unworthy of God's Mercies whilst I did enjoy them, and for being so unfruitful under the Means of Grace, and so unable to obey God, and keep his Commandments. And by reason hereof, I had no peace nor rest to my Soul night nor day, but was perswaded that all the threatenings contained in the Book of God, against wicked and ungodly men, did belong to me, and were my portion, as being one of them against whom they were denounced. Inasmuch as when I took up the Bible to read therein, it was accompanied with much fear and trembling; yet being convinced that it was my duty frequently to read God's Word, I durst not omit or neglect it. Thus I continued a great while, bearing the burden of grievous Temptations, and inward afflictions of Conscience; yet durst I not open the wound, nor reveal my condition to any, as thinking and judging my case to be like no bodie's else. But God, who is rich in mercy, and Jesus Christ, who bought his people at so dear a rate, would not suffer any of his to be lost, and therefore he was graciously pleased to preserve, strengthen and uphold me by his own power, from sinking into Hell through despair, and from running out of my Wits. Thus by  
reason



reason of my continual grief, and anguish of heart night and day, I was so weakened and changed within the compass of six months, that when I came home my dear Parents scarce knew me.

For some years after her return, she, for the most part, continued in her Fathers Family, where by a diligent and conscientious use of the Means, both publick and private, she did thrive and grow in grace; and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as she increased in days and years; Till she was married to Mr. Samuel Clark, to whom in all capacities she was an excellent Wife; After her death in a little Book in her Cabinet, she gave the former account of her Conversion to God, and added many more of her Experiences to this effect.

I here set down Gods gracious dealings with me, not for my own praise, but for the Glory of God, and to stir up my heart unto true thankfulness for such unvaluable mercies. And I have had many experiences of Gods gracious dealings with me at several times under afflictions. 1. When Personal afflictions have lain upon me in respect of bodily sickness, or Spiritual Distempers. 2. In family afflictions when God hath taken away my childaen. 3. When I have been under fears that God would take away my dear husband, by so ne dangerous sickness which he lay under. 4. When I have been under great fears, in the time of our Civil Wars. 5. When I have been under Spiritual Desertion, by Gods hiding his face and favour from me; or by reason of weakness, and want in grace: Or by reason of strong and prevailing corruptions, or by reason of Satans temptations: In all these Cases I have experienced Gods gracious Dispensations toward me; of which I shall set down a few.

It pleased God for many years to keep me for the most

most part in a sad and desolate Estate and condition not clearly evidencing the certain assurance of his love to my soul: So that many times I questioned whether I was a Child of God or no; whether I had part in Jesus Christ or no: whether I should ever attain to life and salvation or no: and this made me walk with a drooping and disconsolate Spirit, so that I could have no sure comfort in any thing: *But the heaviness endured but a night, yet joy came in the morning,* when the Lord caused the light of his countenance to shine upon me which was better than life.

It pleased God upon the death of my youngest Child, that it lay very heavy upon my Spirit, in so much that I was brought oft upon my knees to beg support from God, and to crave his grace and assistance, that I might not break out, to speak or act any thing, whereby Gods name might be dishonoured, or the Gospel discredited: And that he would be pleased to make up this outward loss, with some more durable and spiritual good; and the Lord was pleased to return a gracious and speedy answer to these my requests; for though I lay long under the burden of that loss, yet the Lord in his due time did sweetly manifest his special love to my soul, assuring me that he was my gracious and reconciled Father in Christ; whereby my love to him was much increased, and even inflamed; so that by his grace, it wrought in me more diligence and carefulness, to maintain and preserve these Evidences of his love, and to yield a lively submission unto his will, as well in suffering as in doing: As also by avoiding whatsoever might provoke him, to withdraw the evidences of his love from me, without the sense whereof I could take little or no comfort in any thing.

And furthermore I bless God for it, and speak it to the praise and glory of his rich and free grace,

my prayers and earnest desires have been answered, by God's giving me comfortable assurance, both from the testimony of his holy Word, and the witness of his blessed Spirit, of my eternal and everlasting Salvation in and by Jesus Christ. Yet have I not been without fears and doubtings many times, through want of looking over my Evidences, or by neglecting to keep a narrow watch over my heart; or from some weakness of my Faith, and all through my own default and negligence; the Lord pardon it, and make me more circumspect for the time to come.

By all these I have gained this Experience; 1. That God is true and faithful in making good all his promises reasonably unto us: As that, *All things shall work together for our good*; and that *God will never leave us nor forsake us*, &c. 2. That it is not in vain to wait upon God, and to seek unto him in our straits, who is more ready to hear than we are to ask. 3. That I desire to see, yea the Lord hath shewed me, the vanity and uncertainty of the most satisfying comforts that this World can afford, and what an emptiness there is in them, that so I may, (and I desire so to do) keep weaned affections toward them, and to sit loose from them, that I may be ready to part with them, when God calls them from me, or me from them.

Again in regard of bodily weakness and sickness, my Experiences have been these; 1. That as a broken shoulder can bear no burden; so the least distemper, when the heart is not in a holy frame and temper, is a burden insupportable. If God hides his face from us, and withdraws the evidences of his love, and denies to assist us by his strength, we can neither do, nor suffer any thing. And on the contrary, I found by experience, that I could with much cheerfulness, holy submission, and willingness,

willingness, bear great distempers, when I enjoyed the favour of God in them: So that then I could readily say, *Good is the Work of the Lord*, as well as his Word. And, *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him*, Micah 7. 9. And Job 13. 15. *Tough be slay me, yet will I trust in him*. 2. I found by experience also, that by my pains and sickness, I was the better able to sympathize with, and to pity and pray for others in the like case. 3. Hereby I learn'd the more to prize health, and that upon several accounts, namely, because in health we have liberty and opportunity to enjoy the Publick Ordinances with others of God's People, whereby the Graces of true Christians are quickened, strengthened and increased in us, which otherwise, by reason of our corrupt Natures, are apt to grow cold and languish, as will our bodies if they want food. Again, because in health we enjoy the benefit and the comfort of sweet and quiet sleep, which much refreshes and cheers, and which commonly we want in sickness. Lastly, Because in health, we find sweet, satisfying comfort in the use of God's good Creatures; whereas in sickness, the daintiest food is loathsome, and troublesome. The consideration of these things made me the more to prize health; to be very thankful for it, and the more careful to imploy and improve health and strength to God's glory, and the furtherance of my own Salvation.

In regard of publick dangers, I have had a great deal of experience of God's goodness toward me and mine several times. For when in the beginning of the Civil Wars and Distractions 1642. I was sometimes overwhelmed with weak and distrustful fears, occasioned by my not acting Faith upon the Promises, and not remembering my former Experiences, nor considering God's love, power and  
fidelity

fidelity to his Children, in performing his so many gracious promises, made unto them in all estates and conditions, and to me among the rest: Hereupon I resolved by God's grace and assistance, not to give way to this distrust and diffidence, praying God to assist me therein, and found more courage than formerly, so far as I knew my own heart; though truly the heart is very deceitful, as I have found by sad experience; the Lord teach me and enable me to rely upon him with more courage and constancy, and more to live by Faith upon his promises than formerly I have done. Indeed I have been apt to fall into new fears upon approaching dangers; yet upon successes and glorious deliverances, I have oft resolved, never to distrust God again, and yet my naughty heart hath deceived me, and made me ready to faint; but this I found by experience, to the praise of my God's Free Grace, that as troubles have abounded, my consolations have abounded much more. For God brought seasonably into my mind, many precious promises, which were as so many sweet Cordials, which much supported and comforted my heart, and upheld my spirit, when new storms have arisen, and unexpected deliverances have followed. And I have, and do resolve, by God's Grace, not to distrust him any more. Yea, though more and greater dangers shall arise, yet I will trust in him, and stay my self upon him. *Though, as Job said, he should slay me.* The good Lord establish my heart in this good and holy resolution, who is able to keep us to the end, and hath promised that he will preserve us by his power, through Faith to the Salvation of our Souls.

In regard of Satan's Temptations; especially concerning my coming to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, my Experiences have been these.

Finding

Finding often that I was very unable to fit and prepare my self for a comfortable approach to that sacred Ordinance, I used to desire the prayers of the Congregation unto God in my behalf, and used the best endeavour I could in private, as God enabled me, though I came far short of what was required; and of what I desired: So that I did trust and hope, through God's mercy, to find a comfortable day of it, and to have it a sealing Ordinance to my Soul: But on the contrary, I found much deadness, and little spiritual tast, relish and comfort in the use of it; so that my spirit was oft much troubled, and cast down in me, fearing lest I had some secret sin undiscovered, and unrepented of, which caused the Lord thus to hide his face from me. But then my gracious God brought this into my mind, that the Lord doth sometimes afflict us for the exercise and improvement of our graces, as well as to humble us for our sins. I also considered, that as the Lord doth tender great mercies to us in this Sacrament, renewing his Covenant of Grace, and sealing to us the pardon of our sins in the Blood of Christ; so he gives us leave to ingage our selves, by renewing our Covenant with him, to believe in him, and to trust upon Christ for Life and Salvation: And it pleased God to give me Faith to apply this to my own particular Soul; and a while after to shew me, and to make good to my Soul that precious and comfortable promise, *That tho' he hides his face from us for a little moment, yet with mercy and loving kindness he will return to us again.* This was a wonderful comfort and support to my dejected heart: Blessed be the Lord for ever; I desire to treasure up these Experiences, that for the future, I may in the like case, resolve to put my whole trust and confidence in him, that so Satan may not intrap me in his snares

snared through unbelief; but that I may resist him, steadfast in the Faith. For I am not altogether ignorant of his devices. God's promise is, that in all these things we shall be more than conquerors, through him that hath loved us: And hath said, that, *This is the Victory whereby we overcome the World, even our Faith,* 1 John 5. 4.

In the year 1664. there came to us the sad News of the death of my second Son Mr. John Clark, a godly, faithful and powerful Minister. Thus as the waves of the Sea follow one another, so God is pleased to exercise his Children with one affliction after another; he sees whilst we carry about us this body of sin, we have need of manifold Tryals and Temptations; as saith the Apostle, 1 Pet, 1. 6. *Now for a season ye are in heaviness, if need be, through manifold temptations;* to keep us under, and to make us the better to remember our selves. Indeed it hath been the Lord's course and dealing with me, ever since he stopped me in the way as I was passing to Hell, to raise up one affliction or other, either inward or outward, either from Satan, the World, or my own corrupt heart, and nature; not having wisdom and grace to behave and carry my self as I ought under his various dispensations and providences, as appeared at this time by his laying so great and grievous an affliction upon me, in taking away so dear a Son, from whom I had much Soul-comfort, and ardent affections, which he manifested by his fervent prayers for me, and by his spiritual Letters, and Writings to me; wherein he applied himself suitably to my comfort, in those inward troubles of heart and spirit that lay upon me. This caused my grief and sorrows to take the greater hold on me, upon the loss of one who was so useful to me: Yet hereby I do not derogate from my Elder Son, from whom I have the like help

help and comfort. Upon this sad occasion my grief grew so great, that I took no pleasure of any thing in the World; but was so overwhelmed with melancholy, and my natural strength was so abated, that little food served my turn, and I judged that I could not live long in such a condition.

Hereupon I began to examine my heart why it should be so with me, and whether carnal, and inordinate affections, were not the great cause of my trouble, which I much feared. And having used many Arguments, and laid down many Reasons to my self, to quiet and moderate my passions, yet nothing prevailed to quiet and calm my heart, and to bow me to the obedience of Gods revealed Will: And withal considering that it was God only that could quiet the heart, and set our unruly and carnal affections into an holy frame and order, and that he was a present help in time of trouble; I often and earnestly sought the Lord, with many Prayers and Tears, beseeching him to quiet my heart, and to over-power, and tame my unruly affections, so as to be willing to submit unto him, and to bear his afflicting Hand patiently, and fruitfully, and to be ready and willing to submit, either in doing or suffering, whatsoever he pleased to impose upon me; and to be ready to part with the best outward comfort I enjoyed, whensoever he should please to call for the same.

And it pleased God seasonably to hear my Prayer, to regard my Tears, and to grant my Requests, by calming and quieting my heart and spirit, and to give me much more contentedness to submit to his holy Will, and good Pleasure, who is a God of Judgment, and knows the fittest times and seasons to come in with refreshing comforts, and who waits to be gracious unto those that trust in him. Yet surely I was not without many temptations, in this  
hour



hour of darkness, from that subtle Adversary, who always stands at watch to insinuate and frame his temptations, answerable to our conditions, and like a roaring Lion, walks about continually, seeking to devour poor, yet precious Souls. Then, I called upon the Lord in my distress, and he answered me, and delivered me. Bless the Lord, O my Soul! and all that is within me praise his holy Name. For he hath remembered me in my low and troubled estate, because his mercy endureth for ever.

Having thus had new Experience of God's readiness to hear and help, when I called upon him; and having found that it is not in vain to seek to, and to depend upon God in all our straits, I could not but record these things, that so, Every one that is godly may seek unto him in a time wherein he may be found, who is a present help in time of trouble, and who doth for us abundantly above what we can ask or think. The Lord knows that I write these things for no other end, but that God may have the glory, and that others, especially my Relations, may be encouraged to seek God in their straits, and to trust in him at all times. If God shall please to bring me to my Grave in peace, let this be the Text at my Funeral, *Ephes. 2. 8. For by Grace ye are saved through Faith.* This Scripture I was oft put upon, to have recourse to in times of Temptation and Desertion. Though our hearts may fail us, and our flesh may fail us, yet the Lord will never fail us. Amen.

XXXVIII. *John Earl of Rochester.*

I Shall conclude these Experiences with an account of one of the most Illustrious Instances of Conversion that hath happened in this, and it may be in many preceding Ages, in the person of the Right Honourable *John Willmot* late Earl of Rochester, whose name

name for irreligion and vice became a Proverb; and whose extraordinary repentance is a most remarkable example of the exceeding riches of the grace and mercy of God.

His father was *Henry Lord Wilmot* who in the Civil Wars, adhered to *K. Charles 1.* and was very instrumental in the escape of *K. Charles 2.* after the Battel of *Worcester* in 1651; but dying before the Restoration left his son little more then his Title of Earle of *Rocheſter*, and some pretensions of the favour of *Charles 2.* after his return. This young Lord was educated in the University of *Oxford*, where his wit and Learning soon made him very eminent; But the general joy and debauchery that overran the Nation in 1660. had in a little time so great an influence upon him, that, he as well as a multitude of other Young Gentlemen ran into all manner of excess, to commit all kind of iniquity with greediness. And after his return from his Travels into *Italy*, having some perferment in the Atheistical and debauch'd Court of *K. Charles 2.* he there met with encouragement & countenance in prosecuting the greatest excesses & extravagancies that were possibly to be acted, for as *Salomon* says, *whatsoever his eyes desired he kept it not from them, and with held his heart from no joy*; And to fortifie his conscience against any convictions, he endeavoured to persuade himself, that there was no *Heaven* nor *Hell*, no *God* nor *Devil*, nor any future State in another world; and yet because at some intervals, he had severe reflections in his mind, as to his vicious practices, he was forced to rid himself of them by a continued course of Intemperance, so that he acknowledged that for five years together he was continually drunk.

And as his wickedness, so his wit and parts were extraordinary, so that had his fancy fallen upon Divine Subjects, instead of those impure and filthy ones wherein

wherein he usually excelled his Poetry, he might probably, have been as useful in teaching vertue to this debauched generation, as his prophane Verses have been mischeivous and hurtful in promoting A. theism, vice, and lewdness. As to all outward accomplishments of Learning and education, he was therein compleat, though by his ill management they were at length miserable Comforts to him since they only ministred to his sins, and made his example the more fatal and dangerous, so that he owned himself to be one of the greatest of sinners, for his corrupted Parts made his impieties rise to a high and extraordinary pitch, as the chiefest of Angels for knowledge and Power became the most degenerate; so that his impious actions as well as Writings seem to soar above the reach and thought of other men, taking as much pains to draw others in, and to pervert the ways of Virtue and Religion, as the Apostles and Primitive Saints did to *save their own souls and those that heard them*: for this was the hightning and amazing circumstance of his sins, that he was so diligent and industrious to recommend and propogate them; to declare his sin as *Sadam* and not to hide it; framing Arguments for sin, making Profelytes to it, and writing Panytiricks upon Vice; singing praises to the Great Enemy of God, and casting down Coronets and Crowns before his Throne.

This Character, his Chaplain who Preached his Funeral Sermon, gives of him; and adds, That he was so confirmed in sin, that he lived, and oftentimes almost died a Martyr for it; God was sometimes pleased to punish him with the effects of his debaucheries, yet he confess, that for a long time it had no power to melt him into true Repentance; or if at any time he had some lucid intervals from his folly and madness, how short and transitory were they? all that goodness was but as a morning Cloud,

Cloud, and as the early Dew which vanishes away; he still returned to the same excess of Riot, and that with so much the more greediness the longer he had been detained from it; banishing all thoughts of God and a future Account out of his mind: One Instance is related, which much confirmed him in his Atheistical temper; that he, and another Gentleman of the like humour, had made a solemn Compact and Agreement, it may be not without impious circumstances, that whoever died first, should after his death return from the Grave, and give an account to the other of the state of the next World, and whether there was any such thing or no; soon after the Gentleman died, but never appearing to give him satisfaction, as they had stipulated between them, it made him conclude, that a Man died like a Beast, and that Soul and Body perisht in the Dust; such unreasonable and senseless fancies had he to secure himself against any Convictions of Conscience; since he had never deserved that God should shew a Miracle to satisfy him of that, which his wicked life and practices made him secretly desire might not be true, because it is the interest of those that live like Brutes, to wish they may dye so too; and never be called to the Bar of that God whom their whole Lives have bid defiance unto.

And yet even this desperate Sinner, that seemed to have made a Covenant with death, and was at agreement with Hell, and just upon the brink of them both; God, to manifest the riches of his Grace and Mercy, was pleased to snatch as a brand out of the fire. And, as the Apostle, *though before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, yet obtained mercy, that in him Christ Jesus might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them that should after believe on him to eternal life,* 1 Tim. i. 13, 16. So  
 God

*in the Conversion of Sinners to God.* 153

God struck him to the ground as it were by a light from Heaven, and a voice of Thunder round about him; insomuch that now the scales fall from his Eyes, as they did from the Apostle *Paul's*, his stony heart was opened, and streams of tears gush out, the bitter, but wholsom tears of true Repentance.

The means which prepared the way for this wonderful change, was a sharp and painful sickness with which he was visited, which the Almighty often makes use of to reduce the wandring Sinner to the knowledge of God, and of himself. And though to forsake our sins, then, when we can no longer commit them, seems to be rather necessity than choice; yet we often find that God uses one to bring about the other, and improves a forced abstinence from sin into a settled loathing, and a true detestation of it. As in the case of *Manasseh*, in 2 *Chron.* And of the Prodigal Son, *Luke 20.* And God saith of *Ephraim*, *I will be unto Ephraim as a Lion; I will tear and go away, and none shall relieve him, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face; and in their affliction they will seek me early,* *Hos. 5. 14, 15.* Though some stubborn Natures fly in the face of their heavenly Father while he is correcting them; and others are like to those Children, who, while under the Rod, promise wonders, and presently forget all; As the Psalmist says, *When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned and enquired early after God, nevertheless they did but flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongues, for their heart was not right with him, nor continued they steadfast in his Covenant,* *Psal. 78. 34, &c.* And probably this had been this Penitents Case formerly; but there was an evident difference betwixt the effect of this last sickness upon him, and many others before;  
for

for he told the Minister, that he had now other sentiments and thoughts of things, and acted upon quite different Principles; he was not vexed that his sickness was painful, or that it hindered him from his sins, which he longed again to be at; but submitted patiently to it, accepted it as the hand of God, and was thankful, blessing and praising God not only in his extremities, but for them also.

And whereas formerly he had so habituated himself to cursing and swearing, that he used it almost every minute; there were now no cursings, no railings, nor reproaches to his Servants, or those about him, which in other sicknesses were their usual entertainments; but he treated them with all the meekness and patience in the World, begging pardons frequently of the meanest of his Attendants but for an hasty word, which the extremity of his sickness, and sharpness of his disease (proceeding from an Ulcer in his Bladder, which caused his Urine to pass from him with intolerable pain) might easily force from him. Of which one instance is related, that calling for something which he thought was not brought him soon enough, he cried, *that damned Fellow*, but being gently admonished, instantly recollected himself, complaining of that Language of Hell or Feinds, which he said had been formerly so familiar to him, that it still hung about him, whereas none deserved to be damned more than he had done; and desired to ask his Servants pardon for that rash saying.

His Prayers were not now so much for ease, or health, or a continuance of his life, as for grace and faith, and perfect resignation to the will of God; so that it may be charitably and justly concluded, that his sickness was not the chief ingredient

dient, but through the grace of God, an effectual means of true, tho' late Repentance: For tho' it was a Death-bed Repentance, and therefore full of danger, and the utmost hazard, yet it was not wholly impossible to be true, nor absolutely desperate; since that God, who is a God of infinite compassion and forbearance, allowed him leisure and opportunity for Repentance by a long and lingering sickness; That he awaken'd him out of his spiritual slumber by a pungent distemper, as to provide prudently for his worldly affairs, and yet not to be distracted nor diverted by them from the thoughts of a better World; that God lengthened out his day of grace, and accompanied the ordinary means of Salvation, and the weak Ministry of his Word, with the convincing and over-ruling power of his Spirit to his Conscience, which Word of God became to him quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of his Soul and Spirit: And at last the Spirit of God witness'd to his Spirit, that now he was become one of the Children of God.

Upon my first Visit to him (saith the Minister) at his return from a Journey out of the West, he most gladly received me, shewed me extraordinary respects upon the score of my Office, and thanked God, who had in mercy and good providence sent me to him, who so much needed my prayers and counsels, acknowledging how unworthily heretofore he had treated Ministers of the Gospel, reproaching them that they were proud, and prophesied only for reward; but now he had learnt how to value them, that he esteemed them the Servants of the most High God, who were to shew to him the way to Everlasting Life. At the same time I found him labouring under strange trouble and conflicts of mind, his Spirit wounded, and his Conscience full

of terror. Upon this Journey he told me, he had been arguing with greater vigour against God and Religion than ever he had done in his life-time before, and that he was resolved to run them down with all the arguments and spite in the World. But, like the great Convert *St. Paul*, he found it hard to kick against the pricks. For God at that time had so struck his heart by his immediate hand, that presently he argued as strongly for God and Virtue as before he had done against it. He declared, that God strangely opened his heart, creating in his mind most awful, and tremendous thoughts and apprehensions of the Divine Majesty, with a delightful contemplation of the Divine Nature and Attributes, and of the loveliness of Religion and Virtue; I never, said he, was advanced thus far toward happiness in my life before; for tho' upon the commissions of some sins extraordinary, I have had some checks and warnings considerable from within, yet I still struggled with 'em, and so wore them off again. The most observable I remember, said he, was this: One day at an Atheistical Meeting at a Person of Qualities, I undertook to manage the Cause, and was the principal Disputant against God and Piety, and for my performances received the applause of the whole Company; Upon which my mind was terribly struck, and I immediately replied thus to my self: Good God! that a man that walks upright, that sees the wonderful works of God, and has the uses of his sense and reason, should use them to the denying of his Creator! But tho' this was a good beginning towards my Conversion, to find my Conscience touched for my sins, yet it went off again; yet all my life long I had a secret value and reverence for an honest man, and lov'd Morality in others; but I had formed an odd Scheme



of Religion to my self, which would solve all that God or Conscience might force upon me; yet I was not ever well reconciled to the business of Religion, nor had that reverence for the Gospel as I ought to have.

This Estate of mind continued till the 53. chapter of *Isaiah* was read to him wherein there is a lively description of the sufferings of our saviour, and the benefits thereof and some other portions of Scripture: by the power and efficacy of which word, assisted by his holy spirit, God so wrought upon his heart that he declared, that the mysteries of the Passion appeared so clear and plain to him as ever any thing did that was represented in a glass; so that the joy and admiration which possessed his soul upon the reading of Gods word to him was remarkable to all about him, and he had so much delight in his Testimonies, that he begged his mother and Lady to read the same to him frequently, and was unsatisfied notwithstanding his great pains and weakness, till he had leaped especially, the 53. chapter of *Isaiah* without book, comparing this prophecy with the Passion of Christ in the Evangelists, and observing that it was clearly foretold by the Prophet some hundred of years before it was accomplished; and this consideration had such mighty influence upon his soul, and strengthened his faith, that afterward he never had the least doubt about the certainty of the Gospel and eternal salvation by Jesus Christ; He said the in the first verse of that chapter the prophet declared what great opposition the Doctrine of Christ Crucified would meet with in the world from such obstinate sinners as he was, *who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed.* And that the lowliness of his condition and person upon earth would cause weak, and inconsidering men to undervalue him, because he did not appear with the

vain Splendor & pomp wherein they were pleased. This he said was plainly predicted in the second verse. *He hath no form of comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty, that we should desire him.*

At the same time discourting of the manner of his youth up, which all men knew was too too much devoted to the service of sin, and that the lusts of the flesh, of the eye, and the pride of life had captivated him: He was very large and particular in his acknowledgments about it, and more ready to accuse himself than any other could be, Publickly crying out O Bleſſe God, can ſuch an horrid creature as I  
 ' am be accepted by thee, who has denied thy  
 ' Being and contemned thy Power? can there  
 ' be Pardon and mercy for me? will God own ſuch a  
 ' wretch as I am? ſhall the unſpeakable joys of hea-  
 ' ven be conferred upon me? O Mighty Saviour!  
 ' never but through thine infinite love and ſatisfact-  
 ' ion! O never, but by the purchaſe of thy blood!  
 ' Adding that withall abhorrency he did reflect up-  
 ' on his former courſe of life; that ſincerely and  
 ' from his heart he did repent of all that folly and  
 ' madneſs which he had committed. He had a true  
 ' and lively ſenſe of God's great mercy to him in ſtrike-  
 ' ing his hard heart, and laying his conſcience open,  
 ' which hitherto had been deaf to all God's calls and  
 ' methods, ſaying ' If that God who dyed for Great  
 ' as well as Leſſer finners, did not ſpeedily apply  
 ' his infinite merits to his poor ſoul, his wound was  
 ' ſuch as no man could conceive or bear, Crying  
 ' out, that he was the vileſt wretch and Dog that  
 ' the ſun ſhined upon, or the earth bore; that now  
 ' he ſaw his error in not living up to that Reaſon  
 ' which God had endued him with, and which he  
 ' had unworthily vilified and contemned; wiſhing  
 ' that he had been a ſtarving Leper, crawling in a  
 ' ditch, that he had been a link boy, or a beggar,  
 ' or

or for his whole lifetime confined to a Dungeon rather than thus to have sinned against his God.

His faith was remarkable, in an hearty embracing and pious Confession of all the Articles of the Christian Religion, and all the Divine mysteries of the Gospel, saying; that the absurd and foolish Philosophy which the world so much admired, propagated by the late Mr. Hobbs, and others, had undone him, and many more, of the best Parts in the nation; who without Gods great mercy, may never, it may be, attain to such a serious repentance as his was, He faithfully adhered to, and cast himself entirely upon the mercies of Jesus Christ, and the free grace of God declared to repenting sinners thro' him, with a thankful remembrance of his life, Death and resurrection; begging of God to strengthen his faith, and often crying out *Lord I believe help thou mine unbelief.* He had a mighty love for and esteem of the holy Scriptures, which he had formerly too much slighted and ridicul'd; taking up resolutions to read them frequently, and meditate upon them if God should spare him, having already tasted the good word; for having spoken to his heart, he acknowledged all the seeming absurdities and contradictions thereof, fancied by men of corrupt and reprobate judgments were vanished and their excellencies and beauty appeared, being come to receive the truth in the love of it.

He was extraordinary fervent and frequent in his prayers and supplications, and often called upon others to pray for and with him, or to read the Scriptures to him; and toward the end of his sickness would heartily desire God to pardon his infirmities if he should not be so wakeful & intent thro' the duty as he wished to be; and that tho' the flesh was weak, yet the Spirit was willing, and hoped God

would accept that. He continually beseeched God by his grace and Holy Spirit to sustain him and to keep him from all evil thoughts, from all temptations and Diabolical suggestions, and every thing that might be prejudicial to that religious temper of mind which God had now so happily endued him withal: Crying out one night especially 'how terribly the Tempter did assault him by casting upon him, lewd and wicked imaginations, but I thank God said he, I abhor them all, and by the power of his grace which I am sure is sufficient for me, I have overcome them; 'tis the malice of the Devil because I am rescued from him: and the goodness of God that frees me from all my spiritual enemies.

He was very joyful at his Lady's conversion from Popery, being as he termed it, a faction supported only by fraud and cruelty; which was done by her with deliberation and mature judgment. He was heartily concerned for the pious education of his Children, wishing that his son might never be a wit; that is, said he that he might never be one of those wretched Creatures who pride themselves in abusing God and Religion, denying his being or his providence; but that he might become an honest, and a religious man, which could only be the support and blessing of his family; complaining what a vicious and naughty world his children were brought into, and that no fortunes or honours were comparable to the love and favour of God to them, in whose name he blessed them, prayed for them and committed them to his Protection. He had one son and three daughters and once calling them all before him, he said to a Gentleman then present, that he might there observe how good the Almighty had been to him, in bestowing so many blessings upon him, but that he had carried himself to God like an ungrateful and unthankful Dog.

He gave strict charge to those Persons in whose custody his papers were, to burn all his prophane and lewd writings, as being only fit to promote vice and immorality, by which he had so highly offended God, and shamed and blasphemed that holy Religion into which he had been baptized, and all his obscene and filthy pictures which were so notoriously scandalous. He shewed much readiness to make restitution to the utmost of his power to all persons whom he had injured, and for those whom he could not make compensation to, he prayed for God's, and there pardons. And he was remarkably just in taking all possible care for the payment of his debts, which before he confessed he had not so fairly and effectually done. He was exceedingly ready to forgive all injuries done against him, some of which he particularly mentioned, which were great and provoking, yet he was willing not only to pardon them, but likewise to give them assurance of his future friendship; and hoping that he should be as freely forgiven at the hand of God. He was very tender and concerned for his servants who were about him in his extremities, (to whom he was very kind by his last Will) pitying their troubles in watching with him, and attending him, treating them with candor and gentleness as if they had been his Equals.

He heartily endeavoured to be serviceable to those about him, exhorting them to the fear and love of God, and to make good use of his forgiveness and long suffering to sinners, which should lead them to repentance. And particularly a Person of Quality coming to visit him on his death bed, he addressed him with this most pious and most passionate exclamation. O Remember that you contemn God no more, He is an avenging God and will visit you for your sins; and will in mercy I hope touch you

your conscience sooner or later, as he hath done  
 mine, you and I have been friends and sinners  
 together a great while, therefore I am the more  
 free with you, we have been all mistaken in our  
 conceits and opinions, our persuasions have been  
 false and groundless, therefore God grant you re-  
 pentance, and seeing the same Gentleman the  
 next day again, he said to him, perhaps you were  
 disoblged by my plainness to you yesterday, I spake  
 the words of truth and soberness to you, and stri-  
 king his hand upon his breast he added, I hope  
 God will turn your heart. And he commanded his  
 Chaplain to preach abroad and to let all men  
 know, if they knew it not already, how severely  
 God had disciplin'd him for his sins, by his afflict-  
 ing hand: that his sufferings were most just, tho  
 he had laid ten thousand times more upon him;  
 How he had laid one stripe upon another because  
 of his greivous provocations till he had brought  
 him home to himself; That his former visitations  
 had not that blessed effect which he was now sen-  
 sible of, He had formerly some loose thoughts and  
 & slight resolutions of reforming, and designed  
 to be better, because even the present consequen-  
 ces of sin were still pestering him, and were so  
 troublesome and inconvenient to him; but that he  
 had now other sentiments of things, and acted upon  
 other principles. He gave it another learned Di-  
 vine in charge, not to spare him (if he should dye)  
 in publishing any thing which might be of use  
 to the Living, being willing that the worst as well  
 as the best part of his life should be exposed; so  
 sincere was he in his repentance, as to be willing to  
 take shame to himself, by suffering his faults to be  
 exposed for the benefit of others: Praying God  
 that as his life had done much hurt, so his death  
 might do some good.

Lastly,

Lastly, He discovered a great willingness to dye, if it pleased God; resigning himself always to the Divine disposal; but if God should spare him yet a longer time here, he hoped to bring glory to the Name of God in the whole course of his life, and particularly by his endeavours to convince others, and to assure them of the danger of their condition if they continued impenitent, and how graciously God had dealt with him; being desirous to live upon no other account, but that by the change of his manners, and his former company, and course of life, he might in some measure take off the high scandal that his former behaviour had given. He had a great sense of his Obligations to those worthy Divines who charitably and frequently visited him, and prayed with him, and were thereby all very serviceable to his Repentance. I shall conclude these Remarks with his Dying Remonstrance signed by his own hand, as his truest sense, which is as follows.

‘ For the benefit of all those whom I have drawn  
‘ into sin, by my Example and Encouragement, I  
‘ leave to the World this my last Declaration, which  
‘ I deliver in the presence of the Great God, who  
‘ knows the secrets of all hearts, and before whom  
‘ I am now appearing to be judged;

‘ That from the bottom of my Soul I detest and  
‘ abhor the whole course of my former wicked life;  
‘ that I think I can never sufficiently admire the  
‘ goodness of God, who has given me a true sense  
‘ of my pernicious Opinions and vile Practices, by  
‘ which I have hitherto lived without hope, and  
‘ without God in the World; have been an open  
‘ Enemy to Jesus Christ, doing the utmost despite  
‘ to the Holy Spirit of Grace. And that the  
‘ greatest Testimony of my Charity to such is, to

warn them in the name of God, and as they regard the welfare of their immortal souls, no more to deny his Being, or his providence, or despise his goodness, no more to make a mock of sin, or condemn the pure and excellent Religion of my ever blessed Redeemer, through whose merits alone, I one of the greatest of sinners do yet hope for mercy and forgiveness, Amen.

Declared and signed June 19. 1680.

J. Rochester.

in the presence of

Ann Rochester.

Robert Parsons.

He enjoyed a steady temper of mind through the whole course of his sickness and repentance, which must needs proceed not from a hurry or perturbation of mind or body arising from the fear of death, or dread of Hell only; but from an ingenious love to God, and an uniform regard to virtue, suitable to that solemn Declaration of his; *I would not commit the least sin to gain a kingdom*; And he had all possible symptoms of a lasting perseverance in this admirable Christian Resolution, if God had restored him to health. To which may be added his comfortable persuasions of God's accepting him to his mercy, saying three or four days before his death, I shall dye, but Oh what unspeakable Glories do I see! what joys beyond thought or expression am I sensible of! I am assured of God's mercy to me through Jesus Christ. Oh how I long to dye, and to be with my Saviour.

The time of his sickness and repentance was just nine weeks, in all which space he was so much master of his reason, and had so clear an understanding, except about thirty hours in which he was delirious,



rious, that he never dictated or spoke more composed in his life. And therefore if any shall continue to say, his Piety was the effect of madness or vapours, the assertion is as silly as it is wicked; And that the force of this great penitence may not be evaded by evil men, who are resolved to harden their hearts against all convictions, by saying it was done in a corner; the truth hereof is very well known to all sorts of persons, who in considerable numbers visited and attended him, and particularly by the eminent Physicians who were conversant with him in the whole course of his tedious sickness, and who, if any, were competent judges whether he were in a phrensie or distracted, who all declared that he had not the least Symptoms of it, but was as sensible as at any time in his life and health. And if any shall be still unsatisfied herein, in this hard hearted generation, it matters not, let them at their cost be Unbelievers still, so long as this excellent penitential joys the comfort of his repentance; since from all these admirable signs we have great reason to believe comfortably that his repentance was real and his end happy; and we may accordingly imitate these neighbours and Cousins of Elizabeth Lady L. who when they heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her, came and rejoiced with her, and now in we shall joy with the whole Court of Heavens since our Blessed Saviour has told us Luke. 15. 7. *in joy unto you, that joy shall be in heaven over one that repenteth more than over ninety and nine Physicians that need no repentance.* He dyed without complaint or groan at Woodstock Park in Oxfordshire July 28. 1680.

*Religion.*

## Postscript.

**A**N account of the duty and usefulness of communicating Experiences is already given; I shall only add, that if any should take offence at the publishing of these Experiences, and judge it unmeet, especially because ill men may make a bad use of them, I desire such to consider that wicked Persons will take all opportunities to scandalize Religion, though no occasion be given; and they will likewise abuse the best of things to evil purposes; Yet the Prophet David says, *Come and hear all ye that fear the Lord, and I will declare what he hath done for my Soul. Restore unto me the joy of my salvation, then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee*, Pl. 51. So that this declaring of Experiences is one means which we may expect the Lord will make successful to the Conversion of sinners. And indeed the Book of Psalms is presented to the eyes of all men both good and bad, and doth consist for the most part of Experiences. And Paul declareth the manner of his conversion to those that persecuted him; and the Apostle Peter bids us be ready alwayes to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear. There are several other uses and advantages from declaring Experiences which are mentioned in the beginning, to which the Reader is referred. I shall conclude all with repeating my earnest desires, that this small tract may be of some profit to the souls of men, and then my design in publishing it will be answered. W. D.

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